

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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A COLLEGE BREAKFAST-PARTY.

YOUNG Hamlet, not the hesitating Dane,
But one named after him, who lately strove
For honours at our English Wittenberg,—
Blond, metaphysical and sensuous,
Questioning all things and yet half convinced
Credulity were better ; held inert
'Twixt fascinations of all opposites,
And half suspecting that the mightiest soul
(Perhaps his own?) was union of extremes,
Having no choice but choice of everything :
As, drinking deep to-day for love of wine,
To-morrow half a Brahmin, scorning life
As mere illusion, yearning for that True
Which has no qualities ; another day
Finding the fount of grace in sacraments,
And purest reflex of the light divine
In gem-bossed pyx and broidered chasuble,
Resolved to wear no stockings and to fast
With arms extended, waiting ecstasy ;
But getting cramps instead, and needing change,
A would-be pagan next :—

Young Hamlet sat

A guest with five of somewhat riper age
At breakfast with Horatio, a friend
With few opinions, but of faithful heart,
Quick to detect the fibrous spreading roots
Of character that feed men's theories,
Yet cloaking weaknesses with charity
And ready in all service save rebuke.

With ebb of breakfast and the cider-cup
Came high debate : the others seated there

A College Breakfast-Party.

Were Osric, spinner of fine sentences,
 A delicate insect creeping over life
 Feeding on molecules of floral breath,
 And weaving gossamer to trap the sun ;
 Laertes ardent, rash and radical ;
 Discursive Rosencranz, grave Guildenstern,
 And he for whom the social meal was made—
 The polished priest, a tolerant listener,
 Disposed to give a hearing to the lost,
 And breakfast with them ere they went below.

From alpine metaphysic glaciers first
 The talk sprang copious ; the themes were old,
 But so is human breath, so infant eyes,
 The daily nurslings of creative light.
 Small words held mighty meanings : Matter, Force,
 Self, Not-self, Being, Seeming, Space and Time—
 Plebeian toilers on the dusty road
 Of daily traffic, turned to Genii
 And cloudy giants darkening sun and moon.
 Creation was reversed in human talk :
 None said, 'Let Darkness be,' but Darkness was ;
 And in it weltered with Teutonic ease,
 An argumentative Leviathan,
 Blowing cascades from out his element,
 The thunderous Rosencranz, till

"Truce, I beg ! "

Said Osric, with nice accent. "I abhor
 That battling of the ghosts, that strife of terms
 For utmost lack of colour, form and breath,
 That tasteless squabbling called Philosophy :
 As if a blue-winged butterfly afloat
 For just three days above the Italian fields,
 Instead of sipping at the heart of flowers,
 Poising in sunshine, fluttering towards its bride,
 Should fast and speculate, considering
 What were if it were not ? or what now is
 Instead of that which seems to be itself ?
 Its deepest wisdom surely were to be
 A sipping, marrying, blue-winged butterfly ;
 Since utmost speculation on itself
 Were but a three days' living of worse sort—
 A bruising struggle all within the bounds
 Of butterfly existence."

"I protest,"

Burst in Laertes, "against arguments
 That start with calling me a butterfly,

A bubble, spark, or other metaphor
Which carries your conclusions as a phrase
In quibbling law will carry property.
Put a thin sucker for my human lips
Fed at a mother's breast, who now needs food
That I will earn for her ; put bubbles blown
From frothy thinking, for the joy, the love,
The wants, the pity and the fellowship
(The ocean deeps I might say, were I bent
On bandying metaphors) that make a man—
Why, rhetoric brings within your easy reach
Conclusions worthy of—a butterfly.
The universe, I hold, is no charade,
No acted pun unriddled by a word,
Nor pain a decimal diminishing
With hocus-pocus of a dot or nought.
For those who know it, pain is solely pain :
Not any letters of the alphabet
Wrought syllogistically pattern-wise,
Nor any cluster of fine images,
Nor any missing of their figured dance
By blundering molecules. Analysis
May show you the right physic for the ill,
Teaching the molecules to find their dance,
But spare me your analogies, that hold
Such insight as the figure of a crow
And bar of music put to signify
A crowbar."

Said the Priest, "There I agree—
Would add that sacramental grace is grace
Which to be known must first be felt, with all
The strengthening influxes that come by prayer.
I note this passingly—would not delay
The conversation's tenor, save to hint
That taking stand with Rosencranz one sees
Final equivalence of all we name
Our Good and Ill—their difference meanwhile
Being inborn prejudice that plumps you down
An Ego, brings a weight into your scale
Forcing a standard. That resistless weight
Obstinate, irremovable by thought,
Persisting through disproof, an ache, a need
That spaceless stays where sharp analysis
Has shown a plenum filled without it—what
If this, to use your phrase, were just that Being
Not looking solely, grasping from the dark,
Weighting the difference you call Ego ? This

Gives you persistence, regulates the flux
 With strict relation rooted in the All.
 Who is he of your late philosophers
 Takes the true name of Being to be Will?
 I—nay, the Church objects nought, is content:
 Reason has reached its utmost negative,
 Physic and metaphysic meet in the inane
 And backward shrink to intense prejudice,
 Making their absolute and homogene
 A loaded relative, a choice to be
 Whatever is—supposed: a What is not.
 The Church demands no more, has standing room
 And basis for her doctrine: this (no more)—
 That the strong bias which we name the Soul,
 Though fed and clad by dissoluble waves,
 Has antecedent quality, and rules
 By veto or consent the strife of thought,
 Making arbitrament that we call faith."

Here was brief silence, till young Hamlet spoke.
 "I crave direction, Father, how to know
 The sign of that imperative whose right
 To sway my act in face of thronging doubts.
 Were an oracular gem in price beyond
 Urim and Thummim lost to Israel.
 That bias of the soul, that conquering die
 Loaded with golden emphasis of Will—
 How find it where resolve, once made, becomes
 The rash exclusion of an opposite
 Which draws the stronger as I turn aloof."

"I think I hear a bias in your words,"
 The priest said mildly,—"that strong natural bent
 Which we call hunger. What more positive
 Than appetite?—of spirit or of flesh,
 I care not—'sense of need' were truer phrase.
 You hunger for authoritative right,
 And yet discern no difference of tones,
 No weight of rod that marks imperial rule?
 Laertes granting, I will put your case
 In analogic form: the doctors hold
 Hunger which gives no relish—save caprice
 That tasting venison fancies mellow pears—
 A symptom of disorder, and prescribe
 Strict discipline. Were I physician here
 I would prescribe that exercise of soul
 Which lies in full obedience: you ask,

Obedience to what? The answer lies
Within the word itself; for how obey
What has no rule, asserts no absolute claim?
Take inclination, taste—why, that is you,
No rule above you. Science, reasoning
On nature's order—they exist and move
Solely by disputation, hold no pledge
Of final consequence, but push the swing
Where Epicurus and the Stoic sit
In endless see-saw. One authority,
And only one, says simply this, Obey:
Place yourself in that current (test it so!)
Of spiritual order where at least
Lies promise of a high communion,
A Head informing members, Life that breathes
With gift of forces over and above
The *plus* of arithmetic interchange.
'The Church too has a body,' you object,
'Can be dissected, put beneath the lens
And shown the merest continuity
Of all existence else beneath the sun.'

I grant you; but the lens will not disprove
A presence which eludes it. Take your wit,
Your highest passion, widest-reaching thought:
Show their conditions if you will or can,
But though you saw the final atom-dance
Making each molecule that stands for sign
Of love being present, where is still your love?
How measure that, how certify its weight?
And so I say, the body of the Church
Carries a Presence, promises and gifts
Never disproved—whose argument is found
In lasting failure of the search elsewhere
For what it holds to satisfy man's need.
But I grow lengthy: my excuse must be
Your question, Hamlet, which has probed right through
To the pith of our belief. And I have robbed
Myself of pleasure as a listener.
'Tis noon, I see; and my appointment stands
For half-past twelve with Voltimand. Good-bye."

Brief parting, brief regret—sincere, but quenched
In fumes of best Havannah, which consoles
For lack of other certitude. Then said,
Mildly sarcastic, quiet Guildenstern:
"I marvel how the Father gave new charm
To weak conclusions: I was half convinced

The poorest reasoner made the finest man,
And held his logic lovelier for its limp."

"I fain would hear," said Hamlet, "how you find
A stronger footing than the Father gave.
How base your self-resistance save on faith
In some invisible Order, higher Right
Than changing impulse. What does Reason bid?
To take a fullest rationality
What offers best solution: so the Church.
Science, detecting hydrogen afame
Outside our firmament, leaves mystery
Whole and untouched beyond; nay, in our blood
And in the potent atoms of each germ
The Secret lives—envelops, penetrates
Whatever sense perceives or thought divines.
Science, whose soul is explanation, halts
With hostile front at mystery. The Church
Takes mystery as her empire, brings its wealth
Of possibility to fill the void
'Twixt contradictions—warrants so a faith
Defying sense and all its ruthless train
Of arrogant 'Therfores.' Science with her lens
Dissolves the Forms that made the other half
Of all our love, which thenceforth widowed lives
To gaze with maniac stare at what is not.
The Church explains not, governs—feeds resolve
By vision fraught with heart-experience
And human yearning."

"Ay," said Guildenstern,
With friendly nod, "the Father, I can see,
Has caught you up in his air-chariot.
His thought takes rainbow bridges, out of reach
By solid obstacles, evaporates
The coarse and common into subtleties,
Insists that what is real in the Church
Is something out of evidence, and begs
(Just in parenthesis) you'll never mind
What stares you in the face and bruises you.
Why, by his method I could justify
Each superstition and each tyranny
That ever rode upon the back of man,
Pretending fitness for his sole defence
Against life's evil. How can aught subsist
That holds no theory of gain or good?
Despots with terror in their red right hand
Must argue good to helpers and themselves,

Must let submission hold a core of gain
To make their slaves choose life. Their theory,
Abstracting inconvenience of racks,
Whip-lashes, dragonnades and all things coarse
Inherent in the fact or concrete mass,
Presents the pure idea—utmost good
Secured by Order only to be found
In strict subordination, hierarchy
Of forces where, by nature's law, the strong
Has rightful empire, rule of weaker proved
Mere dissolution. What can you object?
The Inquisition—if you turn away
From narrow notice how the scent of gold
Has guided sense of damning heresy—
The Inquisition is sublime, is love
Hindering the spread of poison in men's souls :
The flames are nothing : only smaller pain
To hinder greater, or the pain of one
To save the many, such as throbs at heart
Of every system born into the world.
So of the Church as high communion
Of Head with members, fount of spirit force
Beyond the calculus, and carrying proof
In her sole power to satisfy man's need :
That seems ideal truth as clear as lines
That, necessary though invisible, trace
The balance of the planets and the sun—
Until I find a hitch in that last claim.
'To satisfy man's need.' Sir, that depends :
We settle first the measure of man's need
Before we grant capacity to fill.
John, James or Thomas, you may satisfy ;
But since you choose ideals I demand
Your Church shall satisfy ideal man,
His utmost reason and his utmost love.
And say these rest a-hungered—find no scheme
Content them both, but hold the world accursed,
A Calvary where Reason mocks at Love,
And Love forsaken sends out orphan cries
Hopeless of answer ; still the soul remains
Larger, diviner than your half-way Church,
Which racks your reason into false consent,
And soothes your Love with sops of selfishness."

"There I am with you," cried Laertes. "What
To me are any dictates, though they came
With thunders from the Mount, if still within

I see a higher Right, a higher Good
 Compelling love and worship? Though the earth
 Held force electric to discern and kill
 Each thinking rebel—what is martyrdom
 But death-defying utterance of belief,
 Which being mine remains my truth supreme
 Though solitary as the throb of pain
 Lying outside the pulses of the world?
 Obedience is good: ay, but to what?
 And for what ends? For say that I rebel
 Against your rule as devilish, or as rule
 Of thunder-guiding powers that deny
 Man's highest benefit: rebellion then
 Were strict obedience to another rule
 Which bids me flout your thunder."

"Lo you now!"

Said Osric, delicately, "how you come,
 Laertes mine, with all your warring zeal
 As Python-slayer of the present age—
 Cleansing all social swamps by darting rays
 Of dubious doctrine, hot with energy
 Of private judgment and disgust for doubt—
 To state my thesis, which you most abhor
 When sung in Daphnis-notes beneath the pines
 To gentle rush of waters. Your belief—
 In essence what is it but simply Taste?
 I urge with you exemption from all claims
 That come from other than my proper will,
 An Ultimate within to balance yours,
 A solid meeting you, excluding you,
 Till you show fuller force by entering
 My spiritual space and crushing Me
 To a subordinate complement of You:
 Such ultimate must stand alike for all.
 Preach your crusade, then: all will join who like
 The hurly-burly of aggressive creeds;
 Still your unpleasant Ought, your itch to choose
 What grates upon the sense, is simply Taste,
 Differs, I think, from mine (permit the word,
 Discussion forces it) in being bad."

The tone was too polite to breed offence,
 Showing a tolerance of what was "bad"
 Becoming courtiers. Louder Rosencranz
 Took up the ball with rougher movement, wont
 To show contempt for doting reasoners
 Who hugged some reasons with a preference,

As warm Laertes did : he gave five puffs
Intolerantly sceptical, then said,
" Your human good, which you would make supreme,
How do you know it ? Has it shown its face
In adamantine type, with features clear,
As this republic, or that monarchy ?
As federal grouping, or municipal ?
Equality, or finely shaded lines
Of social difference ? ecstatic whirl
And draught intense of passionate joy and pain,
Or sober self-control that starves its youth
And lives to wonder what the world calls joy ?
Is it in sympathy that shares men's pangs
Or in cool brains that can explain them well ?
Is it in labour or in laziness ?
In training for the tug of rivalry
To be admired, or in the admiring soul ?
In risk or certitude ? In battling rage
And hardy challenges of Protean luck,
Or in a sleek and rural apathy
Full fed with sameness ? Pray define your Good
Beyond rejection by majority ;
Next, how it may subsist without the Ill
Which seems its only outline. Show a world
Of pressure not resisted ; or a world
Of pressure equalised, yet various
In action formative ; for that will serve
As illustration of your human good—
Which at its perfecting (your goal of hope)
Will not be straight extinct, or fall to sleep
In the deep bosom of the Unchangeable.
What will you work for, then, and call it good
With full and certain vision—good for aught
Save partial ends which happen to be yours ?
How will you get your stringency to bind
Thought or desire in demonstrated tracks
Which are but waves within a balanced whole ?
Is 'relative' the magic word that turns
Your flux mercurial of good to gold ?
Why, that analysis at which you rage
As anti-social force that sweeps you down
The world in one cascade of molecules,
Is brother 'relative'—and grins at you
Like any convict whom you thought to send
Outside society, till this enlarged
And meant New England and Australia too.
The Absolute is your shadow, and the space

Which you say might be real were you milled
To curves pellicular, the thinnest thin,
Equation of no thickness, is still you."

"Abstracting all that makes him clubbable,"
Horatio interposed. But Rosencranz,
Deaf as the angry turkey-cock whose ears
Are plugged by swollen tissues when he scolds
At men's pretensions: "Pooh, your 'Relative'
Shuts you in, hopeless, with your progeny
As in a Hunger-tower; your social good,
Like other deities by turn supreme,
Is transient reflex of a prejudice,
Anthology of causes and effects
To suit the mood of fanatics who lead
The mood of tribes or nations. I admit
If you could show a sword, nay, chance of sword
Hanging conspicuous to their inward eyes
With edge so constant-threatening as to sway
All greed and lust by terror; and a law
Clear-writ and proven as the law supreme
Which that dread sword enforces—then your Right,
Duty or social Good, were it once brought
To common measure with the potent law,
Would dip the scale, would put unchanging marks
Of wisdom or of folly on each deed,
And warrant exhortation. Until then,
Where is your standard or criterion?—
'What always, everywhere, by all men'—why,
That were but Custom, and your system needs
Ideals never yet incorporate,
The imminent doom of Custom. Can you find
Appeal beyond the sentience in each man?
Frighten the blind with scarecrows? raise an awe
Of things unseen where appetite commands
Chambers of imagery in the soul
At all its avenues?—You chant your hymns
To Evolution, on your altar lay
A sacred egg called Progress: have you proved
A Best unique where all is relative,
And where each change is loss as well as gain?
The age of healthy Saurians, well supplied
With heat and prey, will balance well enough
A human age where maladies are strong
And pleasures feeble; wealth a monster gorged
Mid hungry populations; intellect
Aproned in laboratories, bent on proof

That *this* is *that* and both are good for nought
Save feeding error through a weary life;
While Art and Poesy struggle like poor ghosts
To hinder cock-crow and the dreadful light,
Lurking in darkness and the charnel-house,
Or like two stalwart greybeards, imbecile
With limbs still active, playing at belief
That hunt the slipper, foot-ball, hide-and-seek,
Are sweetly merry, donning pinafores
And lisping emulously in their speech.
O human race! Is this then all thy gain?—
Working at disproof, playing at belief,
Debate on causes, distaste of effects,
Power to transmute all elements, and lack
Of any power to sway the fatal skill
And make thy lot aught else than rigid doom?
The Saurians were better.—Guilderstern,
Pass me the taper. Still the human curse
Has mitigation in the best cigars."

Then swift Laertes, not without a glare
Of leonine wrath, "I thank thee for that word:
That one confession, were I Socrates,
Should force you onward till you ran your head
At your own image—flatly gave the lie
To all your blasphemy of that human good
Which bred and nourished you to sit at ease
And learnedly deny it. Say the world
Groans ever with the pangs of doubtful births:
Say, life's a poor donation at the best—
Wisdom a yearning after nothingness—
Nature's great vision and the thrill supreme
Of thought-fed passion but a weary play—
I argue not against you. Who can prove
Wit to be witty when with deeper ground
Dulness intuitive declares wit dull?
If life is worthless to you—why, it is.
You only know how little love you feel
To give you fellowship, how little force
Responsive to the quality of things.
Then end your life, throw off the unsought yoke.
If not—if you remain to taste cigars,
Choose racy diction, perorate at large
With tacit scorn of meaner men who win
No wreath or tripos—then admit at least
A possible Better in the seeds of earth;
Acknowledge debt to that laborious life

Which, sifting evermore the mingled seeds,
 Testing the Possible with patient skill,
 And daring ill in presence of a good
 For futures to inherit, made your lot
 One you would choose rather than end it, nay,
 Rather than, say, some twenty million lots
 Of fellow-Britons toiling all to make
 That nation, that community, whereon
 You feed and thrive and talk philosophy.
 I am no optimist whose faith must hang
 On hard pretence that pain is beautiful
 And agony explained for men at ease
 By virtue's exercise in pitying it.
 But this I hold: that he who takes one gift
 Made for him by the hopeful work of man,
 Who tastes sweet bread, walks where he will unarmed,
 His shield and warrant the invisible law,
 Who owns a hearth and household charities,
 Who clothes his body and his sentient soul
 With skill and thoughts of men, and yet denies
 A human good worth toiling for, is cursed
 With worse negation than the poet feigned
 In Mephistopheles. The Devil spins
 His wire-drawn argument against all good
 With sense of brimstone as his private lot,
 And never drew a solace from the Earth."

Laertes fuming paused, and Guildenstern
 Took up with cooler skill the fusillade:
 "I meet your deadliest challenge, Roseneranz:—
 Where get, you say, a binding law, a rule
 Enforced by sanction, an Ideal throned
 With thunder in its hand? I answer, there
 Whence every faith and rule has drawn its force
 Since human consciousness awaking owned
 An Outward, whose unconquerable sway
 Resisted first and then subdued desire
 By pressure of the dire Impossible
 Urging to possible ends the active soul,
 And shaping so its terror and its love.
 Why, you have said it—threats and promises
 Depend on each man's sentience for their force:
 All sacred rules, imagined or revealed,
 Can have no form or potency apart
 From the percipient and emotive mind.
 God, duty, love, submission, fellowship,
 Must first be framed in man, as music is,

Before they live outside him as a law.
And still they grow and shape themselves anew,
With fuller concentration in their life
Of inward and of outward energies
Blending to make the last result called Man,
Which means, not this or that philosopher
Looking through beauty into blankness, not
The swindler who has sent his fruitful lie
By the last telegram: it means the tide
Of needs reciprocal, toil, trust and love—
The surging multitude of human claims
Which make "a presence not to be put by"
Above the horizon of the general soul.
Is inward Reason shrunk to subtleties,
And inward wisdom pining passion-starved?—
The outward Reason has the world in store,
Regenerates passion with the stress of want,
Regenerates knowledge with discovery,
Shows sly rapacious Self a blunderer,
Widens dependence, knits the social whole
In sensible relation more defined.
Do Boards and dirty-handed millionaires
Govern the planetary system?—sway
The pressure of the Universe?—decide
That man henceforth shall retrogress to ape,
Emptied of every sympathetic thrill
The All has wrought in him? dam up henceforth
The flood of human claims as private force
To turn their wheels and make a private hell
For fish-pond to their mercantile domain?
What are they but a parasitic growth
On the vast real and ideal world
Of man and nature blent in one Divine?
Why, take your closing dirge—say evil grows
And good is dwindling; science mere decay,
Mere dissolution of ideal wholes
Which through the ages past alone have made
The earth and firmament of human faith;
Say, the small arc of Being we call man
Is near its mergence, what seems growing life
Nought but a hurrying change towards lower types,
The ready rankness of degeneracy.
Well, they who mourn for the world's dying good
May take their common sorrows for a rock,
On it erect religion and a church,
A worship, rites, and passionate piety—
The worship of the Best though crucified

And God-forsaken in its dying pangs;
 The sacramental rites of fellowship
 In common woe; visions that purify
 Through admiration and despairing love
 Which keep their spiritual life intact
 Beneath the murderous clutches of disproof
 And feed a martyr-strength."

"Religion high!"

(Rosencranz here) "but with communicants
 Few as the cedars upon Lebanon—
 A child might count them. What the world demands
 Is faith coercive of the multitude."

"Tush, Guildenstern, you granted him too much,"
 Burst in Laertes; "I will never grant
 One inch of law to feeble blasphemies
 Which hold no higher ratio to life—
 Full vigorous human life that peopled earth
 And wrought and fought and loved and bravely died—
 Than the sick morning glooms of debauchees.
 Old nations breed old children, wizened babes
 Whose youth is languid and incredulous,
 Weary of life without the will to die;
 Their passions visionary appetites
 Of bloodless spectres wailing that the world
 For lack of substance slips from out their grasp;
 Their thoughts the withered husks of all things dead,
 Holding no force of germs instinct with life,
 Which never hesitates but moves and grows.
 Yet hear them boast in screams their godlike ill,
 Excess of knowing! Fie on you, Rosencranz!
 You lend your brains and fine-dividing tongue
 For bass-notes to this shrivelled crudity,
 This immature decrepitude that strains
 To fill our ears and claim the prize of strength
 For mere unmanliness. Out on them all!—
 Wits, puling minstrels, and philosophers,
 Who living softly prize of suicide,
 And suck the commonwealth to feed their ease
 While they vent epigrams and threnodies,
 Mocking or wailing all the eager work
 Which makes that public store whereon they feed.
 Is wisdom flattened sense and mere distaste?
 Why, any superstition warm with love,
 Inspired with purpose, wild with energy
 That streams resistless through its ready frame,

Has more of human truth within its life
Than souls that look through colour into nought,—
Whose brain, too unimpassioned for delight,
Has feeble ticklings of a vanity
Which finds the universe beneath its mark,
And scorning the blue heavens as merely blue
Can only say, 'What then?'—pre-eminent
In wondrous want of likeness to their kind,
Founding that worship of sterility
Whose one supreme is vacillating Will
Which makes the Light, then says, "Twere better not."

Here rash Laertes brought his Handel-strain
As of some angry Polypheme, to pause ;
And Osric, shocked at ardours out of taste,
Relieved the audience with a tenor voice
And delicate delivery.

"For me,

I range myself in line with Rosencranz
Against all schemes, religious or profane,
That flaunt a Good as pretext for a lash
To flog us all who have the better taste
Into conformity, requiring me
At peril of the thong and sharp disgrace
To care how mere Philistines pass their lives ;
Whether the English pauper-total grows
From one to two before the noughts ; how far
Teuton will outbreed Roman ; if the class
Of proletaires will make a federal band
To bind all Europe and America,
Throw, in their wrestling, every government,
Snatch the world's purse and keep the guillotine :
Or else (admitting these are casualties)
Driving my soul with scientific hail
That shuts the landscape out with particles ;
Insisting that the Palingenesis
Means telegraphs and measure of the rate
At which the stars move—nobody knows where.
So far, my Rosencranz, we are at one.
But not when you blaspheme the life of Art,
The sweet perennial youth of Poesy,
Which asks no logic but its sensuous growth,
No right but loveliness ; which fearless strolls
Betwixt the burning mountain and the sea,
Reckless of earthquake and the lava stream,
Filling its hour with beauty. It knows nought
Of bitter strife, denial, grim resolve,

Sour resignation, busy emphasis
 Of fresh illusions named the new-born True,
 Old Error's latest child; but as a lake
 Images all things, yet within its depths
 Dreams them all lovelier—thrills with sound
 And makes a harp of plenteous liquid chords—
 So Art or Poesy: we its votaries
 Are the Olympians, fortunately born
 From the elemental mixture; 'tis our lot
 To pass more swiftly than the Delian God,
 But still the earth breaks into flowers for us,
 And mortal sorrows when they reach our ears
 Are dying falls to melody divine.
 Hatred, war, vice, crime, sin, those human storms,
 Cyclones, floods, what you will—outbursts of force—
 Feed art with contrast, give the grander touch
 To the master's pencil and the poet's song,
 Serve as Vesuvian fires or navies tossed
 On yawning waters, which when viewed afar
 Deepen the calm sublime of those choice souls
 Who keep the heights of poesy and turn
 A fleckless mirror to the various world,
 Giving its many-named and fitful flux
 An imaged, harmless, spiritual life,
 With pure selection, native to art's frame,
 Of beauty only, save its minor scale
 Of ill and pain to give the ideal joy
 A keener edge. This is a mongrel globe;
 All finer being wrought from its coarse earth
 Is but accepted privilege: what else
 Your boasted virtue, which proclaims itself
 A good above the average consciousness?
 Nature exists by partiality
 (Each planet's poise must carry two extremes
 With verging breadths of minor wretchedness):
 We are her favourites and accept our wings.
 For your accusal, Rosencranz, that art
 Shares in the dread and weakness of the time,
 I hold it null; since art or poesy pure,
 Being blameless by all standards save her own,
 Takes no account of modern or antique
 In morals, science, or philosophy:
 No dull elenchus makes a yoke for her,
 Whose law and measure are the sweet consent
 Of sensibilities that move apart
 From rise or fall of systems, states or creeds—
 Apart from what Philistines call man's weal."

"Ay, we all know those votaries of the Muse
Ravished with singing till they quite forgot
Their manhood, sang, and gaped, and took no food,
Then died of emptiness, and for reward
Lived on as grasshoppers"—Laertes thus:
But then he checked himself as one who feels
His muscles dangerous, and Guildenstern
Filled up the pause with calmer confidence.

"You use your wings, my Osric, poise yourself
Safely outside all reach of argument,
Then dogmatise at will (a method known
To ancient women and philosophers,
Nay, to Philistines whom you most abhor);
Else, could an arrow reach you, I should ask
Whence came taste, beauty, sensibilities
Refined to preference infallible?
Doubtless, ye're gods—these odours ye inhale,
A sacrificial scent. But how, I pray,
Are odours made, if not by gradual change
Of sense or substance? Is your beautiful
A seedless, rootless flower, or has it grown
With human growth, which means the rising sum
Of human struggle, order, knowledge!—sense
Trained to a fuller record, more exact—
To truer guidance of each passionate force?
Get me your roseate flesh without the blood;
Get fine aromas without structure wrought
From simpler being into manifold:
Then and then only flaunt your Beautiful
As what can live apart from thought, creeds, states,
Which mean life's structure. Osric, I beseech—
The infallible should be more catholic—
Join in a war-dance with the cannibals,
Hear Chinese music, love a face tattooed,
Give adoration to a pointed skull,
And think the Hindu Siva looks divine:
'Tis art, 'tis poesy. Say, you object:
How came you by that lofty dissidence,
If not through changes in the social man
Widening his consciousness from Here and Now
To larger wholes beyond the reach of sense;
Controlling to a fuller harmony
The thrill of passion and the rule of fact;
And paling false ideals in the light
Of full-rayed sensibilities which blend
Truth and desire? Taste, beauty, what are they

But the soul's choice towards perfect bias wrought
 By finer balance of a fuller growth—
 Sense brought to subtlest metamorphosis
 Through love, thought, joy—the general human store
 Which grows from all life's functions? As the plant
 Holds its corolla, purple, delicate,
 Solely as outflush of that energy
 Which moves transformingly in root and branch."

Guildenstern paused, and Hamlet quivering
 Since Osric spoke, in transit imminent
 From catholic striving into laxity,
 Ventured his word. "Seems to me, Guildenstern,
 Your argument, though shattering Osric's point
 That sensibilities can move apart
 From social order, yet has not annulled
 His thesis that the life of poesy
 (Admitting it must grow from out the whole)
 Has separate functions, a transfigured realm
 Freed from the rigours of the practical,
 Where what is hidden from the grosser world—
 Stormed down by roar of engines and the shouts
 Of eager concourse—rises beauteous
 As voice of water-drops in sapphire caves;
 A realm where finest spirits have free sway
 In exquisite selection, uncontrolled
 By hard material necessity
 Of cause and consequence. For you will grant
 The Ideal has discoveries which ask
 No test, no faith, save that we joy in them:
 A new-found continent, with spreading lands
 Where pleasure charters all, where virtue, rank,
 Use, right, and truth have but one name, Delight.
 Thus Art's creations, when etherealised
 To least admixture of the grosser fact
 Delight may stamp as highest."

"Possible!"

Said Guildenstern, with touch of weariness,
 "But then we might dispute of what is gross,
 What high, what low."

"Nay," said Laertes, "ask
 The mightiest makers who have reigned, still reign
 Within the ideal realm. See if their thought
 Be drained of practice and the thick warm blood
 Of hearts that beat in action various
 Through the wide drama of the struggling world.
 Good-bye, Horatio."

Each now said "Good-bye."

Such breakfast, such beginning of the day
Is more than half the whole. The sun was hot
On southward branches of the meadow elms,
The shadows slowly farther crept and veered
Like changing memories, and Hamlet strolled
Alone and dubious on the empurpled path
Between the waving grasses of new June
Close by the stream where well-compactated boats
Were moored or moving with a lazy creak
To the soft dip of oars. All sounds were light
As tiny silver bells upon the robes
Of hovering silence. Birds made twitterings
That seemed but silence Self o'erfull of love.
'Twas invitation all to sweet repose;
And Hamlet, drowsy with the mingled draughts
Of cider and conflicting sentiments,
Chose a green couch and watched with half-closed eyes
The meadow-road, the stream and dreamy lights,
Until they merged themselves in sequence strange
With undulating ether, time, the soul,
The will supreme, the individual claim,
The social Ought, the lyrist's liberty,
Democritus, Pythagoras, in talk
With Anselm, Darwin, Comte and Schopenhauer,
The poets rising slow from out their tombs
Summoned as arbiters—that border-world
Of dozing, ere the sense is fully locked.

And then he dreamed a dream so luminous
He woke (he says) convinced; but what it taught
Withholds as yet. Perhaps those graver shades
Admonished him that visions told in haste
Part with their virtues to the squandering lips
And leave the soul in wider emptiness.

GEORGE ELIOT.

April, 1874.

A DOUBTING HEART.

CHAPTER III.

IDUNA'S GROVE.

MR. WEST was accustomed to have to wait even on cold evenings a long time at his own door before it was opened to him, and he had learned to shut his ears, when at last he was admitted, to a good many sounds of scuffling feet and sharp voices, which told of hasty preparations to receive him. He did not care now to probe beyond the outside surface of decorum and order, which was indeed too thin to deceive eyes that did not court deception. There had been a time when he had stood up for his right to know everything that passed in his own house, and devoutly believed in his power to regulate all in his own way, and carry out his wishes to the minutest point. He had been a martinet when nothing had opposed him but the wills of people weaker than himself. Lately, circumstances and, as it had seemed to him, the whole course of nature had declared against him; and, being continually more and more worsted in his combats with these, he had withdrawn himself gradually into closer and closer entrenchments, abandoning the out-works in despair, but always struggling to keep some little kingdom where his will might be supreme, and whose minute details he might regulate. The management of his family and household had baffled him now for some time, and he was at present, with the energy of despair, holding on to the attempt to maintain his own personal surroundings precisely as they used to be in the days of his prosperity. Even this possibility was daily slipping away, in spite of the efforts of his wife and elder children to keep this last strong hold of his injured

dignity intact. They were wondering with sick hearts what hold on life he would have when the thin appearance of past gentility they were holding up before his eyes had at length melted away.

Emmie had time to restore the jewel-box to its usual place before Mary Anne had made herself fit to open the door for master, and her next movement was a hasty flight up two staircases to the threshold of "Air Throne." Thence she watched her father's entrance into the house, peeping at him over the balusters of the highest staircase of the high house. She was not at any time given to make the worst of appearances, but to-day she was struck with the dejection written on her father's face, and expressed by his whole figure, as he wearily mounted the first flight to his own bedroom; the nerveless hand clinging to the balusters, the trailing footstep, the bowed head, the grey, still face, that had perhaps been handsome and dignified once, but that seemed now petrified to an image of sullen, outraged pride, brooding on itself. Emmie sighed and shivered a little as she looked. It was just as if the fog outside had gathered itself up into a visible shape, and stalked into the house to put out all the lights, and hang a dead weight on every one's breathing. But it was her father, and she must not grudge him the privilege of bringing what atmosphere he liked into the house, during the few hours he was in it, even if it was an atmosphere of chill, gloomy reserve, in which the most modest little household joys withered, or had to hide themselves away. Her mother was unfortunately the chief sufferer, for she had to sit in the very thickest of the fog the whole evening. To the

other members of the family it made itself felt more or less distinctly, hushing fresh voices, putting clogs on springing steps, checking with a dull hand the eager beating of young, hopeful hearts. But (and Emmie's sensitive conscience reproached her a little for finding relief in this thought) there were spots even under this roof whence the dark influence was successfully shut out—pleasant nooks—when, by just opening and shutting a door, one could find oneself breathing fresh air and morally basking in sunshine. As this thought rose to comfort her, she turned and looked down a dark passage, at the end of which a faint stream of light issued from the crevices of a low door. Behind it was "Air Throne," and from thence a crisp, cheerful sound, like the rippling of a little river, reached Emmie where she stood;—a pleasant sound of two gay voices in continuous chatter, broken now by a musical laugh—Christabel's laugh, that was music itself—ringing from the low-roofed attic down the dark, cold passage, and warming Emmie's heart. Well that it was such a big house, and the attics far enough removed from the ground-floor for people to dare to laugh freely there without fear of being thought hard-hearted.

Looking down the balusters towards a lower story, she could see a half-opened door, from which another wider and brighter stream of light came. Emmie could have wished that door were shut, for her father would pass it in going down stairs, and the lavish light would bring him a reminder that would not please him. That, however, was the "Land of Beulah," and Mrs. Urquhart, the kind-hearted old lady, who, with her son Dr. Urquhart, rented all the best rooms in the house, was too important a person to be dictated to as to when she should shut or open her drawing-room door. The door was left ajar because Dr. Urquhart had not yet returned from his afternoon round of visits to his patients,

and his mother was listening for his ring at the bell. Emmie knew just how she looked as she sat listening, for she had lately shared the watch once or twice; not anxious, only pleasantly expectant; and she knew too how the comely old face would broaden into smiles of perfect content, when the quick, business-like knock and ring came, followed by a springy step on the stairs that all the household knew. The drawing-room door was always close shut after that for the rest of the evening; but though it shut in long intervals of silence, there was no gloom. Emmie could not continue the scene; but if she had been clairvoyante, and had watched the occupants of the "Land of Beulah" till bed-time, she would only have seen pictures that would have confirmed her pleasant thoughts of the place. The old mother nodding over her parti-coloured knitting, when the cosy meal was over; the son with his books and papers and shaded reading-lamp at a table writing, covering his eyes to think a minute, and then rapidly dashing off a page or two with nervous fingers pressed on the pen, and knitted brow under the thick fair hair that had tumbled in disorder over it; aware, however, all the time, of every movement in the chair by the fire, and quite ready, when the signal came, to jump up, thrust his long fingers through his hair, clearing his brow of thought and frowns with the movement, and come forward to the fire for a comfortable half-hour's chat with his mother before she retired to bed. This was the crowning cup of pleasure in the tranquil days Mrs. Urquhart shared with her now prosperous son;—days that were a sojourning in the "Land of Beulah" to her at the end of a stormy life, as she often told Emmie. It was talk that had no pain, and not much excitement in it, over the happy events of each successful day, flavoured sometimes with a mild joke or two about the young lady-students up stairs, whom Dr. Urquhart

came across sometimes in lecture-rooms ; in whose company (he said) he felt puzzled as to whether he should treat them as comrades or as young ladies, and against whose possible designs on her son's heart Mrs. Urquhart, generous in everything else, watched jealously. Perhaps there would be a little sham quarrel when Mrs. Urquhart would maliciously repeat some gossip about the Moores she had learned from Emmie, and Dr. Urquhart would pretend a great deal of excitement in defending them ; all to be ended by a tenderer than usual good-night kiss.

Yes there was pleasant talk from happy hearts in that room every evening, but the gay atmosphere never penetrated to the parlour just beneath, where Mr. and Mrs. West spent their evenings alone ; she lying on the high-backed sofa by the wall, he seated upright on a chair beside her, their hands clasped together, not talking much, not often even looking at each other, but mutely interchanging pain, and lessening it perhaps by such silent partnership ; she suffering only for him, he for himself chiefly, but also for all the others dependent upon him whom he had dragged down into what looked to him an abyss of shame and ruin. He was like a shipwrecked mariner on a raft in a wide sea—the sea of his own bitter thoughts—clinging to the one comrade who had courage to embark with him on its salt, desolate waves, but separated from all other help. Yet if he could but have cleared his eyes from the mists of tears that pride would never let him weep away, he might have seen that the storms which to his thought had shattered his whole existence, had but carried off a few useless spars and a little over-crowded canvas, and that all his real treasures were still preserved to him, and were lying unheeded at his feet.

Emmie stood leaning her arms on the balusters, and looking down into the hall, till she had seen her father recross it and shut himself up in the

dining-room, and then she too ran lightly down. A thought had struck her while waiting which had changed her intention of going immediately to "Air Throne," to tell the story of the jewel-case to Katherine Moore. She must find out from Harry whether there was to his knowledge any fresh cause for the additional shade of misery she had read on her father's face, or whether it was only one of those chance thickenings of the fog of gloom in his mind, which they had learnt to expect as certainly, and endure as patiently as January snow storms, or east winds in March. Harry had come home as usual a quarter of an hour after Mr. West, and had made the most of the interval before dinner, while his father was up stairs, to bring the brightness no one could help feeling in his presence, to bear upon his mother ; but when Emmie found him he had retreated to the little tea-room, once a butler's pantry, where noise being fortunately shut in by double doors, the younger members of the family were accustomed to congregate in the evening. Mr. West had not been known to put his head inside the green-baize doors for years ; and Mrs. West, since Dr. Urquhart had one day spoken gravely to her on the necessity of sparing herself fatigue whenever she could, had paid it few visits. It was the spot which, according to Alma, had played an important part in turning Constance Rivers into Lady Forest ; but less fastidious and more imaginative persons might have seen a "Temple of Youth," or even an "Iduna's Grove," within the four dingily-papered walls, cumbered with faded furniture. It was the one place in the house where the naturally high spirits of the young Wests had free play, and managed to bubble up above the dull crust of care which extinguished them outside the sanctuary. Old Mary Ann, whose forty years of domestic service had left more poetry in her than three London seasons had left to Constance, was capable of disentangling the genius of the place from the moth-holes and

weather-stains of the furniture, and used of evenings to steal up from her cleaning in desolate regions below, where hungry winds moaned through empty cellars and larders, to refresh herself by standing between the double doors, and listening to the gay racket of voices within. It sent her back to her cogitations as to how to dish up two mutton cutlets to look as if they were five with renewed courage, convinced that there were still members of the West family worth cooking for, at reduced wages. Emmie closed the double doors quickly behind her, however, mindful of ears in the house that had a right to complain of hubbub; for as she had been longer absent from the juvenile party than usual, there was of course a great outcry to greet her reappearance—everybody speaking at the top of their voices and at once.

"Where have you been all the afternoon, Emmie? Have you heard about the row on the stairs when the boys came home at five o'clock?"

"Casabianca and the Gentle Lamb would play at 'tig' on the stairs, thinking everybody was out, and they quarrelled and fought on the landing, till Casabianca knocked the Gentle Lamb right into the 'Land of Beulah.' Two old ladies were drinking tea with Mrs. Urquhart, and you should have seen their faces when the Gentle Lamb came rolling through, and fell with his head among the tea cups."

The speaker of the last sentence was Mildred West, a tall energetic looking girl of fourteen, somewhat given to domineering, and nick-named Mildie by the rest of the family, in the exercise of a peculiar style of wit prevalent in Iduna's Grove, which consisted in calling everything by the least appropriate name that could be found for it. The fun of these names might not be apparent to outsiders, but they afforded great satisfaction to the young Wests, and were in fact the chief weapons by which they held the troubles of life at bay, and so to speak, kept their heads above water. A new privation or grievance always seeming to

lose its sting with these young people as soon one of their number had invented a by-word to fling at it.

Emmie shook her head at the two offenders, who were now struggling for possession of the least rickety of the school-room chairs, and said to her sister—

"But what were you doing to let them fight on Mrs. Urquhart's landing, Mildie?"

"My Physics," said Mildie, loftily; "I was in the middle of a proposition; and I think with Katherine Moore, that a girl's studies are too important for her to allow them to be interrupted by the folly of boys. Women are the students of the future, Katherine says, and I mean to do credit to my family, whatever becomes of the others."

Of course this speech was a signal for a general onslaught of the boys on Mildie; but Harry, who did not seem quite in his usual spirits to-night, checked the skirmish peremptorily; and while the rest of the party were taking their seats round the tea-table, Emmie found the opportunity she wanted of drawing him aside to ask her question.

"Anything happened to-day?" she whispered.

"Bad—do you mean?"

"Oh, my dear Harry, of course I meant to papa; and does anything good ever happen to him—should I expect that?"

"The poor Governor," said Harry, with a good deal more compassion in his voice than there had been in Emmie's. "He certainly is unlucky, poor old chap; he always does contrive to get himself into every mess that's going: If he could but stick to what he's told to do, and not put his unlucky oar in where it's not wanted, he might at least drudge on without being noticed, like the rest of us. But I suppose it is difficult for him to forget the time when he was one of the heads, and ordered as he liked, and to remember that he's nothing in the new house but an old supernumerary clerk, kept on sufferance. It must be hard."

"But has anything more than usual happened to-day to annoy him, do you suppose?"

"Mr. Cummins sent for him to his private room to speak about his having taken more upon himself than he ought in a business matter that came under his eye, and, of course, muddled it. Their voices got so loud, for you know when the Governor's pride is thoroughly stung he can speak, and Cummins is an insolent brute, that a good deal was overheard in the clerks' room. I can tell you, Emmie, I sat trembling, for every minute I expected, and at last hoped, that the Governor would end the lecture he was getting by throwing up his place and mine, and vowing never to make a pen-stroke in the old hole again. I wonder how he helped it. I wonder how he ever swallowed his pride and rage, so as to get out of that room without a regular flare up; and how he bore to walk back to his place, with the other clerks staring at him. All of them young fellows like myself, except two superannuated old chaps, who began in grand-papa's time I believe, and who like old idiots as they are, tried to show they pitied him. It was an awful time for us both I can tell you, I daren't so much as look at him, to see how he was taking it, but I could feel the desk we were both writing at tremble when he leaned upon it again and took up his pen. Poor old chap!"

"If he should quarrel with Mr. Cummins some day and throw up his post and yours, what would become of us?"

"I daresay I should get employment somewhere else; but wherever he went it would be the same story—the impossibility it is with him to act as a subordinate, and his ill-luck. I am afraid he is not of much use where he is, and that though Cummins can't turn him out, for it was agreed he was to have a post in the office when the old firm was broken up; he is trying all he can to provoke him to resign."

"We should still have the house and the lodgers."

"The lease will be out the year after next."

"Poor mother," said Emmie, softly.

"Poor old Governor," said Harry, passing his hand quickly over his frank boyish eyes. "Well, he fought a good fight to-day, to hold back the words that would have made us all beggars; and if I can only keep a sharp look out over him, and stop him from running off the lines again, things may never really be as bad as we are imagining. I believe the Governor would rather blow out his brains any day than stand Cummins' bullying: but he will bear a great deal for the mother and us; and I must keep my eyes about me, without his knowing it, and nip in the bud any fresh designs of his that won't hold water."

"I thought you said that Mr. Cummins was the new youngish partner, who had taken a liking to you, and who invited you to dine with him at his club one day?"

"Yes," said Harry, "and what do you think one of the clerks overheard him saying he did it for?—because though my father was an old dolt, and I something of a cub, I had a confoundedly pretty sister."

"What did he mean? *Me?* Oh, Harry!" cried Emmie, taking her hands from Harry's shoulders where she had been resting them confidingly, and covering her face, while, in a minute, a dark flood of angry crimson glowed above the white finger tips to the roots of her dark hair, and invaded the small lobes of the little ears that showed beneath its coils. "He meant me!"

Harry put his arm round her and drew her close to him, his face glowing too with a proud sense of brotherly protection and superior worldly wisdom.

"Why, Emmie, what signifies what a fool of a fellow like that says? I would not have repeated his idiotic words, if I thought you'd have cared a rush about them."

"To be talked about like that from one person to another," said Emmie, slowly uncovering her eyes, which to

Harry's remorse had large bright tears in them. "I knew he looked at me in a horrid way that day—the day I went in a cab to fetch papa home, when poor little Willie was taken in his first fit; but I did not know he had talked about me."

"You are a fine little personage," said Harry, stooping down and kissing a tear from her cheek. "You're a nice little person to pretend to be a friend of Miss Katherine Moore, who gets up and speaks in public meetings, and stands up for women's rights, if you can't bear to be talked about."

. "It is the sort of talk," said Emmie. "I can't explain it, but no one would understand me better than Katherine Moore. It is the right to be spoken about and looked at in another way, whether one is rich, or poor, or handsome, or ugly, that she stands up for—for women. Never mind, dear Harry; don't be vexed with yourself. I won't think of it again; but you must allow that it is horrid to be looked at, as Mr. Cummins looked at me, just because one happens to have come out in a hurry with a shabby hat and dress on. I wonder how girls feel who never have such things to do, who, like Alma Rivers, have fathers they are proud of belonging to, whom everybody is forced to respect. The last time I was at a party at the Rivers's, Alma dropped her fan while she was dancing, and half-a-dozen people rushed to pick it up, and Mr. Anstice gave it back to her with a look—as if he thought she ought to be waited upon by people on their knees. It must make one feel very odd—that way of being looked at."

"Well," said Harry, "I don't suppose there's much chance of our poor old Governor ever holding up his head with Lord Justice Rivers again; but it would be hard lines on him if his children had a grudge against him for that. Don't be down-hearted, Emmie; at all events, you've got a brother to stick up for you, and punch on the head any one from this time forth who looks at you in a way you

don't like. Christabel Moore has not even that."

"She is far above wanting any help," said Emmie, enthusiastically; "and Harry, dear, I'm not so selfish or so silly as to wish you to quarrel with Mr. Cummins because he was rude to me. You must think of keeping things straight for papa's sake, and forget my little vexations. There, look, my face is all right again now. I can bear it. Papa has to bear being looked down on, and spoken to roughly every day, you say. I have not thought enough about that. I shall pity him more now when he comes in with a gloomy face, and grudge less the trouble mamma takes to keep home vexations from him. Do you know, Harry, she has made up her mind to sell her pearls?—the necklace and pendants she used to wear on company nights. I have the case in my pocket now, and I am going after tea to consult Katherine Moore about getting her jeweller to find out how much they are worth, and put us in the way of selling them. Do you remember how we used to take peeps at them in their case when we were children, and how lovely mamma looked when she had them on?"

"She don't want pearls for that," said Harry, stoutly; "and as for you and Mildie, young ladies whose bosom friends study medicine and take to public speaking are mountains high above caring for jewels, I suppose. But let us have a look before they go. It's something to have had big pearls in the family, is it not?"

"Will you look at them here?" said Emmie, cautiously drawing a corner of the purple case from her pocket. "Can we trust Casabianca and the Gentle Lamb?"

"I'll undertake them," said Harry. "I think they ought to see mother's pearls once. Now, children (raising his voice), we are going to show you the family jewels; but if any one of you comes too near, and so much as breathes upon them, under the table that one goes before he has time to wink, and stays

there for the rest of the evening. Now, attention, and keep your places," taking the case from Emmie, and touching the spring as he spoke.

Even Mildie condescended to be enthusiastically admiring, though she excused her interest on the plea that pearls were an abnormal product of nature, on whose natural history she was, on the smallest encouragement, willing to enlighten an ignorant public. The public however preferred ignorant wonder, and to expend its energy on a dance of triumph round the case.

"If Emmie would only come to church in 'em once," suggested Casabianca (*alias* Aubrey West), who owed his sobriquet to his unlikeness to Mrs. Hemans's martyr to obedience, "wouldn't I bring Tom Winter there to see her; and would not he think small beer of all his own people after that!"

"Or she might wear them when she goes with us to the athletic sports next summer, for all our fellows to see," amended the Gentle Lamb. "Or, I say, Emmie, you might set them up as prizes for fellows to jump for, and I'd promise to win them back for you at long jump. Would not it be jolly fun?"

"You fool," said Casabianca. "What would be the good of giving Tom Winter a chance of winning them, and bringing his sister to church in them instead of Emmie? You'll let Tom Winter see you in 'em some day, won't you, Emmie? He'll never believe we've had such things in our family unless he sees you in them, however much I tell him."

"What signifies Tom Winter," put in Sidney, a bright-eyed boy of seven, Emmie's secret pet, and favourite of the fry. "What signifies what he thinks of our sister? You are a great deal too good for him to look at, Emmie, even without the pearls. Now, I advise you to put them on directly, and go up stairs and show yourself in them to Dr. Urquhart. He has promised to give me a microscope, so you'd better please him all you can."

This suggestion brought such a return of flush to Emmie's scarcely cooled cheeks, that Harry would have rewarded the speaker with a seat under the table, if Mildie had not luckily struck in with a proposition that pleased everybody—Why should not Emmie put on the pearls for them all to see, and wear them through the evening, just to familiarise the younger ones with the spectacle of the family grandeur, which would otherwise never be anything but a tradition to them. Let them at least be able to think they knew how mamma had looked in the days of which old Mary Ann told them so many stories. Emmie, though she had been sharing her mother's sorrows with full sympathy all the afternoon, and weeping over her father's and her own a minute ago, had light-heartedness enough left in her to yield to the general wish without much pressing. She had often wondered how the cold smooth stones would feel on her neck, and how the milk-white band of mingled pearls and diamonds would show among her dark braids just above her forehead—would she look dignified like Alma in them—the sort of person to be approached with distant admiration, such as she had seen for Alma in Mr. Anstice's eyes.

This evening was the last chance of having her curiosity set at rest, and as the gas was still burning in the dressing-room her father had lately left, it would only take her a minute to discover what sort of a new Emmie would look out of the depths of the great mirror, which her mother had only retained when the best furniture had been given up to the lodgers, because old Mrs. Urquhart preferred putting on her cap before a less pretentious looking-glass. She ran lightly up stairs, and after a little preliminary arrangement of her every-day evening dress, so as to leave a portion of her white neck and arms clear for the pearls to rest on, she took the jewels from their case, with almost trembling fingers, and clasped the necklace round her

slim throat. It fell low on her neck, and how lustrous the milk-white stones showed there, rising and falling with her quick breath, like flecks of moonlight on a blown drift of snow. The bracelets were hard to manage, for they would keep falling over her hands; but the head-band fitted exactly, and looked just as it used to look long ago on Mrs. West's head—a pale pure halo crowning the dusky night of hair, and giving a sort of soft dignity to the smiling face beneath it. Emmie did not think such words, or any like them; but as she stepped backwards, and looked at the reflection in the mirror, she was certainly not displeased with what she saw. It was not Alma—it was only Emmie after all—but still an Emmie who might wear the traditional family pearls for one night in the sight of the boys, and perhaps of Katherine and Christabel Moore, without disgracing them. It was too late to go up to Air Throne now, and introduce the jewels in this guise to the friend whose aid in selling them was to be asked. She must now wait to settle that business till the Moores came back from giving their evening lessons; but as Emmie descended the stairs she thought of a person who had a right to a farewell inspection of these relics of past grandeur, if love of them, and pride in them, counted for anything. Old Mary Ann would be sure to discover, or guess the new abstraction from her mistress' jewel-box, by its effect on the weekly expenditure, and there was wisdom in stopping her mouth from remonstrance, by appearing to take her into their counsels beforehand. Besides, she had been particularly gracious towards the attic lodgers lately, and deserved the confidence that she valued more than wages.

With this design in her mind, Emmie passed the green-baize door, without opening it, and descended to the basement story. The air of its wide passages, always clear and cold, made her shiver, but they were less dark than usual; some one had turned

on the gas jet at the foot of the staircase, and Mary Ann was standing underneath it talking to a black-coated figure, that, at the sound of Emmie's step, turned round and came forward to meet her. It was Dr. Urquhart. He did not look surprised at the apparition of a figure so adorned on the kitchen stairs, as a person less intent on the business in hand might; he came quickly to her, and spoke at once—

“Miss West! how fortunate! you are the person I am seeking. I am sorry to tell you that one of the young ladies who lives up stairs has been knocked down at the corner of a street close by, and is, I fear, seriously hurt. She was taken into a shop near, and I was sent for, and finding she could be moved, I am having her brought home. Your mother must be warned however of what has happened before the commotion of carrying her through the hall begins. I hurried in first to get hold of you. Now, can you go in and tell your mother at once, without startling her, or shall I do it?”

Emmie turned very white at the first word, and her voice shook as she said—

“One of the Moores! Oh! not Katherine?”

“It is the elder of the two ladies; but, Miss West, you must not faint, if you please. There is a great deal for every one to do, and your mother must be thought of.”

Emmie was not in danger of fainting; accidents were too rife among the boys for her nerves not to be case-hardened; but if she had had any disposition to give way, these words, and the smile that accompanied them, encouraging but peremptory, would have acted as a tonic.

“I think I had better go to mamma,” she said. “If she sees you unexpectedly, she will fancy at once that something has happened to one of the boys.”

“Right—she is easily alarmed, and ought not to be allowed to agitate herself. Go into the dining-room first,

and prepare her with a word or two, and I will follow and explain the arrangements it is necessary to make at once."

As they passed the green-baize door, Emmie said—

"I must look in here for a minute, and tell Harry to keep the children quiet, or they will wonder what has become of me, and all rush out into the hall."

She left the door open during her brief talk with Harry at the tea-table, and when she came back, she saw that Dr. Urquhart's sensible grey eyes were fixed upon her with an expression in them she had never seen there before, as if he had just made some discovery about her, that had put the prominent thought of the minute before out of his head.

It startled her back into a recollection of what she had been doing before the news of the accident came, and as she raised her hand to the jewels in her hair, she could not keep back an exclamation of dismay.

"Oh! Dr. Urquhart, what am I to do? I dressed myself up in these things to please the children, and I dare not go into the dining-room dressed as I am now—it would make papa so angry."

"Would it indeed? How long will it take you to change?"

"About two minutes."

Dr. Urquhart took out his watch.

"I can give you two minutes," he said; "there will still be time for what we have to do; but you must not be longer."

Emmie ran breathlessly up stairs, and Dr. Urquhart returned his watch to his pocket and stood looking after her. Sidney, who had crept to the door to learn as much as possible of what was going on, observed him closely for a second or two, and then went back to his seat, and announced the result of his investigation to his brothers.

"Well," he said, "I told you that Dr. Urquhart would like to see the pearls upon Emmie, and I was quite right—he did like it."

CHAPTER IV.

AIR THRONE.

THE house that Mr. West held on a long lease, though situated in a part of London long since deserted by the tide of fashion, had had its day of splendour, and was built in a solid generous fashion, liberal of space and of inside decoration, which does not prevail in modern buildings. Even the rooms under the roof showed signs of careful finish, and had possibilities of being made comfortable and even picturesque, which caused Katherine and Christabel Moore to congratulate themselves nearly every day on the good luck which had timed their arrival in London, to the crisis when Mrs. West, the only person to whom they had a letter of introduction, was looking out for occupants for her unused upper rooms. It was a step towards the realization of the hopes that had brought them, unknown, unprotected, and young, to fight for the means of existence in the very spot where the struggle is hottest, that they could hardly have expected to gain so easily. Katherine was glad to be able to write to the few friends, who had not thrown them off in disgust at their rashness and Utopian views of life, that she and her sister were living under the roof of a lady known to their mother in past days. It made the remonstrances that had been addressed to her, on the dangers to which her independent modes of action might expose her sister, less disagreeable to remember. Christabel used to look over her sister's shoulder as she wrote this announcement, and profess to be a little scandalised at her finding any satisfaction in throwing such a sop as this to the Mrs. Grundies they had left behind them. If they had determined to be independent of conventional restraints, and to trust for protection to their own upright wills and strong resolution to carve out worthy careers for themselves, why should they have recourse to pretences like

this, and make concessions to other people's scruples, which had in them, at least, a flavour of distrust in their own theories? Christabel would peer down saucily as she spoke into Katherine's quiet strong face, which looked so incapable of pretences or concessions that it was a sort of joke to accuse her of them; and Katherine would reply, with an answering glance of fond admiring love, whose presence would explain even greater inconsistencies in a feminine adventurer on new paths. It might be all very well to burn one's boats, and cut off all retreat to the old country if one started on the journey of exploration alone, but when there was another by one's side, whose fate was a million times more momentous, then—. No! Katherine never could bring herself to say she was not thankful to have theegis of Mrs. West's respectability thrown over their enterprises. Even when she was indulging in her most soaring day-dream of the future triumph of what she called "her cause," foolish, nervous Mrs. West's motherliness would recur to her memory, as a sort of strong-hold in the back-ground, into which Christabel at least might always run and be safe from slanderous tongues.

That *arrière-pensée*, even more than their other recommendations, made the low-roofed attics a really home-like place to Katherine, and sent her out from them to the arduous struggle of her student's life, and to the teaching that filled up its spare hours, with a courage that had known no check as yet.

It was no easy life the orphan sisters led together there; but they had known so much worse things than toil and privation, that these came to them almost in the guise of interesting new acquaintance, and were met with a gay defiant welcome that forced them to put on their least repellent looks. What hardship was there in sitting down to bread and tea meals which their own labour had paid for, to people who were used to eating sumptuous meals made bitter by taunts of depen-

dence, or cold silent tokens of antagonism and dislike. Christabel, whose ardent imaginative character had suffered most in the atmosphere of suppression from which they had escaped, and who, being the younger by some years, did not share Katherine's feelings of responsibility, found such delight in the mere fact of their freedom that her spirits were always ready to bubble up under the weight of a privation or toil, and lift it to the height of a pleasure, or a welcome experience at least. Weariness might come by and by, but she was so far from it yet, that there was even energy left to seek out difficulties and obstacles for the mere joy of overcoming them and proving her strength. Mr. Carlyle, in his essay on Jean Paul Richter, excuses the German poet's defiance of public opinion in his celebrated "clothes' controversy," by pointing out that a youthful disposition to be combative in unimportant matters while a great life-struggle is also going on, shows a reserved fund of energy which leads one to augur well for the chance of victory in the serious endeavour. Dare any of Christabel's female friends have so augured from her indulgence in little vagaries of taste in dress, which certainly did not make the poverty of the materials employed less conspicuous, however much they might have satisfied an artist's eye, or by her small defiances of public opinion in minor social questions such as were perhaps not calculated to avert criticism from a manner of life in itself likely to provoke remark. Dare the few friends who loved Christabel have seen nothing in these mutinies but the overflowing bravery of a strong spirit on its way to success? or must they have looked grave, considering that the path of a woman who aims at making an independent career for herself is already too difficult for it to be safe for her to plant a needless thorn upon it?

The sisters, who had formerly scarcely ever known what it was to be an hour apart, were now separated during the

greater part of each day, by having to carry on their different sorts of work in different places; but this circumstance only made the reunion that came in the evening an ever-recurring love-feast that lost nothing of its gladness by being constantly repeated. Katherine's eyes were always just as hungry for the sight of Christabel's face, as on the evening when she had returned to the attic after her first day's study, and found her sister at home before her, and Christabel was never less eager to pour out the history of the day's doings into Katherine's ears. The talk and the love-making they had been used to spread over the whole day had all to be crowded into a few evening hours now, no wonder the sound of their voices came like a rippling river from Air Throne, when Emmie West stood and listened outside. Christabel's outpouring of talk generally came first. She said a little about what she had done and seen during the day; and then a great deal about what had been transacted in that inner world of imagination which was to her the most real world she knew. Katherine followed her sympathetically through both narratives—first, through the little outer court of actual experience, where the figures were often somewhat dull and pale, as not having had power to force an impression of themselves through the dream-halo in which Christabel walked, then passing as it were through a curtain into the theatre, where as yet all the most moving events of Christabel's life had been transacted—the brightly-lighted, gaily-coloured drama of her thoughts and dreams. The dream-people who performed there were so much the most congenial companions the sisters had, that to Katherine as much as to Christabel it was a coming home to rest after work among strangers.

When a day in dreamland had been well lived through, Katherine's time to tell her experience came. Her separate life had only its outer court that could be talked about;

but it was a very different sort of outer court from Christabel's. Very real and distinctly seen, if in some respects strange and different from her expectations. Her daily story of hard unaided work, of hindrances obtrusively thrust in the way, of snubs and slights meeting her at every step in her enterprise, was always told shortly, in plain words, without a tinge of bitterness in them. She could not afford to let herself speak bitterly; it would have cost too much of the force she had to husband for each day's struggle. It was only, when something of a contrary nature had to be related—when some unexpected word of encouragement had come her way, when some hand in authority had been held out to help her up, instead of to push her down, or when some service had been rendered by a fellow-student in such a way as neither to wound her feminine susceptibility, nor hurt her independence; it was only on the rare occasions when things of this kind came into the day's history, that her voice warmed up, and her lip trembled, and her eyes fixed on Christabel's face took a depth of feeling, which told Christabel how far into the proud sensitive heart the usual experience of contempt and coldness cut down.

A short silence would sometimes follow on the end of Katherine's story. The two sisters would sit hand-in-hand leaning against each other, Katherine's soft dusky braids touching Christabel's rich auburn, the two hearts beating to the same tune, for they were thinking of each other. It was the gravest moment of their day. The pause after hard work and after the joy of meeting again, when anxious thoughts and doubts, if any were at hand, knocked at the door. Christabel would soon escape from them back into her dream-world; but Katherine often had a hard struggle to wrench herself away from what she felt were disabling forebodings, cowardly looking back, to a past from which they had cut themselves off. Yet the question would come, had she done right to

bring Christabel here with her? If she should fail, and for all her toils and struggles, reap only the blame of having tried to thrust herself where she was not wanted; if she did not prove herself stronger than all the strong prejudices arrayed against her; if she had to fall back beaten in the hard battle she had entered on, what retreat was left to them? The old sphere would not open again to receive them, or if it would, their position in it had been hard before, but would be intolerable when they went back with the disgrace and ridicule of such an attempt and such a failure fixed upon them. She could bear anything for herself, but Christabel was such a rare treasure to guard; so bright and tender to those who loved her—such an enigma to all others; so rich in gifts that yet needed tender encouragement to give them fair play; such an enthusiast for work and for high thoughts, and after all, such a dreamer. Katherine's arm would tighten its hold on her sister's waist as her thoughts reached some such point; and Christabel, startled out of a fancy that had taken her worlds away, would look up suddenly into her sister's face, with surprised wide-open blue eyes, bright and yet misty, with the far-off sweet look in them which comes from habitually dwelling on distances invisible to ordinary eyes.

A change of place for these evening talks, from the neighbourhood of the wide-hobbed fire-place, to the window-seat of the low attic window, was the principal event by which the sisters marked the passing of the seasons in their present life, too full of work to be monotonous, and yet having few breaks in it.

The first months of their freedom—their hardest and loneliest, and yet perhaps their gayest time—had been fireside months, when the hearth-rug (a dingy black and grey one, knitted from strips of cloth by some West of a past generation) had been Christabel's throne for the greater part of the evening, and when Katherine's household thoughts

had turned chiefly on schemes for bringing her medical books and her papers to the draughty end of the table, and leaving the cosiest nooks for Christabel's easel and the embroidery frame, to which she gave an hour or two every night. The lengthening days, when there had been light but not warmth far into the evening, had not been an improvement; and then, quite suddenly, as it seemed, there had come a time when the low-roofed attics had turned into furnaces filled with lifeless air, and the hour for comfortable talk had to be put off almost till bed-time; then at last, weary with the long hot day, they would sit by the open window and watch the crimson in the west die out into a uniform pearly grey over miles and miles of monotonous roof-lines, down to a distance where the dome of St. Paul's lifted itself, round and perfect, into the empty evening sky. The pain and the pleasure of that time, too, had passed, and now here they were again, with the shiny black bars of the grate for their evening prospect. What had been their gains and losses since Christabel, on the first day of their taking possession of the rooms, had exercised her ingenuity in turning every bit of carving into a picture illustrative of the rapid development of the fortune they had come to seek? They had been discussing the question together when Emmie heard their voices, as she stood at the head of the stairs, and Christabel's laugh testified that the retrospect had not saddened them. While she could laugh—such a gay, free-hearted laugh, too—all must be well with Katherine; well with her heart, at least; for Katherine was too far-sighted not to be subject to twinges of mental anxiety, even when filled with present heart-content.

Even now, when she got up, with the echo of Christabel's happy laughter still in her ears, she felt only half-satisfied with their late outpouring of confidence, and wished she could have penetrated deeper than words could reveal, and read the yet unformed thoughts, the hopes and purposes to

come, whose seeds lay in her sister's soul. Would the time ever arrive when she would begin to be "sick of shadows," and take to looking at life as it really was, and, if so, in what guise would the awakening come? Would some new influence dawn into her life strong enough to merge her two worlds into one, and force her to act and suffer among realities with the same intensity with which she was now dreaming them all in her own way. Katherine knew of only one influence that was likely to do for Christabel what the mere friction of every-day experience was rapidly doing for herself, and it was an influence which, when they began to live their independent life, and put themselves out of the way of being sought by their equals, they had decided must never come near them. Christabel had better go on dreaming to old age, Katherine thought, than come out into the daylight of reality through that door. She paused with an armful of anatomical drawings—her last night's work—which she was going to put away on a high shelf, to comfort herself with a reassuring study of her sister's face. Christabel was lying at full length on the hearth-rug, spreading out the long skirt of her serge dress, cut after some artistic design, more pleasant to the eye than convenient to a pedestrian, to dry by the fire; for the same purpose she had let down her thick hair, which the small hat she wore had badly protected from mist and rain; and she was now propping herself on her elbows, and resting her face between the palms of her hands, as she read a book open before her.

"Luckily," Katherine thought, "it was a face that could easily pass in and out among crowds without attracting many eyes to it:—

"*Pale et pourtant rose,
Petite avec grands yeux.*"

There was something in the soft outlines and dim colouring that gave an effect of remoteness, as of something dropped into a place to which

it did not belong; a lack of responsiveness in feature and expression which would deaden most people's interest rather than provoke it. Nobody but Katherine ever saw the sleeping beauty in the face wake up; to all others it was shrouded, shut out from their seeing, as completely as Christabel's soul was cut off from ordinary contact by her dreams. Well, it was best so. Katherine satisfied herself that this year had not brought a hairsbreadth of change; even the rose hue under the fair skin was not faded by toil or privation; there was not a line of care on the broad low brow or round the dreamy mouth; the delicate chin propped between the two hands had not sharpened in outline. It would be difficult to point out the lightest sign of the passage of another year over that fair drooping head. Does living among dreams make one, so long as it lasts, fadeless, like them?

"Listen, Katherine," Christabel said, suddenly, looking up from her book; "it is Pascal speaking of imagination: 'Ce pouvoir énorme; l'ennemi éternel de la raison, qui se plaît à étaler son empire en l'amenant dessous ses pieds, a crée dans l'homme une seconde nature. Il a ses joies, ses douleurs, sa santé, son malaise, ses richesses, sa pauvreté. Il arrete l'empire des sens, et encore il leur fait part d'une pénétration artificielle.'"

"Are you looking out passages from Pascal to read with old David Macvie?" Katherine asked. "Is not that travelling rather fast?"

"Plums," said Christabel. "Of course it won't be much of a French lesson; but we have drudged on at the grammar so many evenings lately that I think I may give him a treat. It will be great fun for me, too, to see and hear. I wish you could be with us. He will read the paragraph through first in his good solid Scotch-French, then I shall give him the English of a word or two he will not have understood, and gradually the full meaning of the passage will dawn upon him, and he will begin to knit

and unknit the wrinkles about his forehead till his face spreads out into a blaze of comprehension and delight ; the spectacles will come off then, and he will fold his hands on the book, and we shall talk about imagination : 'its joys, its griefs, its sickness, its health,' till one of the hundred and odd clocks on the walls of the back shop tells us that the lesson has lasted two hours instead of one. Then I shall have to quarrel with him about not taking my usual fee, the half-crown, that always lies ready, neatly folded up in paper, in the broken Sévres china tea-cup on the chimney-piece, and that he generally slips into my hand as I take leave, with a look of deferential apology that will some day, I am afraid, oblige me to kiss him. I should have done it before now if he did not take snuff and eat onion porridge for supper always just before I come in."

"To think of old David Macvie being the only intimate friend we have made, out of this house, during our year in London. Aunt Fletcher would have spared some of her warnings if she could have foreseen how little dangerous our acquaintance would be. We might just as well have stumbled upon him, his old clocks and watches, his cases of butterflies, and his semi-scientific, semi-mystical talk in a little shop in a back street in Chester."

"But I should not have given him French lessons at half-a-crown an hour, if we had found him when we were living with Aunt Fletcher, and above all, he would not, under those circumstances, have led us into the one adventure that Aunt Fletcher could reasonably profess to be horrified at, that has befallen us since we came here. I mean our going with him to that meeting, and your getting up to speak. It was all over in such a few minutes that I can still hardly believe it happened ; but I did admire your courage, Katherine."

"I felt so like a hypocrite while sitting still," said Katherine, thoughtfully. "It made all my professions unreal, if when the occasion came and

I found myself among people who seemed to be seeking after remedies for evils of which I thought I knew the cures, and seeking them in a wrong direction, I could not get up simply and tell them what I thought. I was not courageous, for I had no idea that what I said would rouse such opposition and dislike."

"Had not you ! I knew it by instinct. I could not look round on the faces about us without being sure that the kind of things you would say would surely give offence. I felt it in the air."

"And generally I know so much more of what is going on than you do."

"Ah, yes ; but you see it has two sides to it, this imagination, as David and I shall prove by a thousand instances to each other directly. 'It arrests the exercise of the senses, and again it gives them an artificial power.' One never can tell how it will serve one, 'its riches, its poverty.' However, there was one man in the room who understood you. I saw that before he got up to speak, and how well he spoke, like a regular trained orator ; and what a pleasant winning face and manner his was. David thinks that between you, you and he, you made an impression on the meeting ; and if you had not spoken he would never have taken up the cudgels in your defence."

"A curious momentary partnership of two unknown people who found themselves thinking alike in an adverse crowd. I think these flashes of sympathy do one good, if there are only points here and there to catch the electric light it will travel on, and their being far apart does not so much signify. I am glad David thinks I did no harm."

"He simply glories in you ; but I doubt if you have not fallen in someone else's esteem in the exact proportion in which you have risen in his. I put Emmie West on to telling the tale to old Mrs. Urquhart this morning, just from my goodnatured impulse to let everybody have plums to their taste,

and is not she enjoying the delight of passing on the scandal to the Gresham Lecturer this instant? What a pity it is that we are not *clairvoyantes*, and cannot see and hear. I really think it will be worth a free admission to the lectures for you. Mrs. Urquhart will look upon it as a shield to secure her son's heart against the possibility of damage from you for ever afterwards, and she will withdraw her objections to his taking you under his professional wing, and fighting some of your battles for you, as I really think he is half disposed to do."

"Poor old lady; she would be much happier if she could set her fears at rest, and give her benevolence free play. Coming up stairs after you to-night, I caught sight of her face as we passed her open door in our wet cloaks, and the conflict on it was quite comic. She longed to ask us in to get warm by her fire till our own had burned up, but could not make up her mind to expose her son to the danger of intimacy with adventuresses like ourselves. If she only knew how safe he was, she would sleep better of nights."

"There, you are mistaken, Kitty; there, my imaginative insight carries me further than yours. It would not at all conduce to Mrs. Urquhart's repose to believe that her son was quite safe from any one's admiration; it would puzzle her so she would lie awake wondering what kind of a heart it was that could be indifferent to winning her treasure, and perhaps begin at last to lay schemes for conquering it. Think, Kitty, of your coming, some years hence, when you are over thirty, and have taken your doctor's diploma, to be courted by Mrs. Urquhart for her son! Shall we not feel that we have slain prejudice, and trampled our enemies under our feet, then?"

The sisters enjoyed a hearty laugh together at this notion; and then Katherine felt Christabel's skirts, and gave her leave to get up from before the fire, and prepare for their evening expedition to a house, a few streets

distant, where they had each a lesson to give. They crept softly down the back stairs, not to remind Mr. West unnecessarily of the presence of lodgers in the house; but as they passed the green baize door, Katherine paused an instant, and drew Christabel's attention with a smile to the clatter of gay young voices that was going on within.

"If we had been members of a large family, and had had brothers," she said, as soon as they were out in the fog, and she had drawn Christabel's hand underneath her arm, "I wonder what difference it would have made in our destinies—whether we should have been strong enough to act independently of them, according to our own ideas, or whether we should have been hampered? Can you imagine the difference it would have made in our lives, at Aunt Fletcher's, if we had had a bright, energetic brother, like Harry West, coming to the house once or twice a year to make much of us? Which side would he have taken, when the great question of what we were to do with ourselves came up?"

"That would have depended on the sort of brain he had, and it is hardly likely that there should have been another in the family equal to yours, Kitty; probably he would have thought it incumbent on his manhood to side with Aunt Fletcher, and use all the power he would have had over us to condemn us to worsted work, mild visiting, and perpetual snubbing for all the vigorous years of our lives. I think we may be thankful that so little of the masculine element came into our lot. We found Aunt Fletcher hard enough to deal with, and she is only a woman like ourselves."

"Only a woman," said Katherine, giving the little hand on her arm a squeeze against her heart. "What an admission from you. How pleased Aunt Fletcher would be if she could hear you saying that."

"And don't you think she would be pleased if she could see us to-night turning out in the wind and the rain at eight o'clock to make our way to a

dingy old shop in a back street, where you will climb up three pairs of dirty stairs to give a lesson in mathematics to a consumptive young Jew, and I shall teach an old Scotch optician to read French badly at half-a-crown an hour? Only think, we might have been seated in a warm, well-lighted drawing-room at this moment, nursing Aunt Fletcher's two fat King Charles's in our laps, and with nothing on earth to do but make conversation about the weather, and get snubbed for our pains. I say, Kitty, does not London mud smell sweet? and don't you breathe freely in the fog—and would not you like to jump lamp-post high for joy that we are safe in it?"

Christabel turned her head towards the lamp-post under which they were passing as she spoke, and its light fell for that instant on a sparkling, mischievous face, in which all the latent beauty was awake and looking out. The momentary illumination electrified two passers by, who had chanced to be near enough to catch the last words, and who had turned with amused surprise to look at the speaker, but it was lost on Katherine, whose eyes were fixed on a distant spot in the badly-lighted street.

"Stay," she said, "is not that a woman's voice calling for help? The sound comes from that little group of people down there by the railway-bridge. I am afraid something is going on that ought not to be. Ah! again; yes, it is certainly a woman's voice calling for help."

"Let us hurry on and see if we can be of any use."

"If you were not here."

"Am I a Pharisee, pray, to pass by on the other side? Why, Kitty, what did we break away from the drawing-room atmosphere for, if not to protest against there being any such words as 'if you were not here' applied to ourselves to make us hindrances instead of helps when work is to be done? Let us hasten. I won't be

made an 'if you were not here' to hinder you from acting."

They pressed forward towards a corner of the road where the arch of a railway-bridge cast a shadow so deep as to swallow up the red glare from the windows of a gin-shop in its neighbourhood. A group of two or three were hanging about in the shade, but no crowd had gathered as yet; drunken rows on that spot were occurrences of too ordinary a nature to attract much notice, and as the sisters left the pavement they could distinguish a pair standing close together at whom the stragglers were idly staring. A ragged, hatless man, holding a woman fiercely by the shoulder and pressing her up against the wall of the bridge where the shadow was deepest.

"He has struck her again; he's a desperate bad 'un, he is," one of the lookers-on was saying to another, in a half-indifferent, half-frightened voice, as Katherine passed between them. She did not pause to ask any questions but, pushing her way through the bystanders, walked straight up to the scene of action and laid her white, gloveless hand on the ruffian's arm. She was shabbily enough dressed not to attract much attention among such bystanders as these, even when taking the unusual course of interfering between a drunken ruffian and a woman whom he had presumably the right to ill-use. She was putting herself in danger of life or limb, no doubt, but then, perhaps, she was a Bible-woman, whose business it was, a somebody queer who had better be left to her own devices.

The Don Quixotes of the present day have at least the advantage of not attracting so much attention as their prototype, for however extravagant their enterprizes may be, they keep as much as possible to ordinary appearances, and do not arm themselves for their frays so much as with a dinted copper shield, or a lame Rosinante to lift them above the heads of the crowd.

IS FETISHISM A PRIMITIVE FORM OF RELIGION?

PART II.

I HAVE entered thus fully into the difficulties inherent in the study of the religions of savage tribes in order to show how cautious we ought to be before we accept one-sided descriptions of these religions; still more, before we venture to build on such evidence as is now accessible, far-reaching theories on the nature and origin of religion in general. It will be very difficult indeed to eradicate the idea of a universal primeval fetishism from the text-books of history. That very theory has become a kind of scientific fetish, though, like most fetishes, it owes its existence to ignorance and superstition.

Only let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean to dispute the fact that fetish worship is widely prevalent among the negroes of Western Africa and other savage races. What I wish to put clearly before you is *first*, that there is hardly any religion without something which we may call fetish-worship; *secondly*, that there is no religion which consists entirely of fetishism.

The word *fetish* has assumed with us an ugly sound, but we have only to replace the word by *symbol* or *emblem*, which in many cases, though not in all, differs very little from what De Brosses and his followers call a fetish, and there will be much less reluctance to admit a fact, which a careful study of religion teaches, viz., that it is almost impossible for any religion, our own not excepted, to be entirely free from fetish-worship. Every outward sign, every instrument connected with divine worship is apt to become a fetish, as soon as its original import is forgotten. If an altar, as such, or a sacrificial vessel, if relics of saints, if a stone or a plant,

a picture, a banner, or a book, is treated with more than usual respect, it may be called by the outside world a fetish. Again, if people carry a rare coin in their purse as a hatch-penny (*Heckepfennig*), if young ladies value a piece of four-leaved clover, because it is rare and brings luck, if we suspend a branch of mistletoe in our rooms at Christmas, all this, in the eyes of a negro, would be worship of *gru-grus* or fetishes.

But what should we gain by mixing up objects so heterogeneous in their origin under the common name of fetishes? De Brosses speaks already of fetishes, not only in Africa, but among the Red Indians, the Polynesians, the northern tribes of Asia; and after his time hardly a single corner of the world has been visited without traces of fetish-worship being discovered. I am the last man to deny to this spirit which sees similarities everywhere, its scientific value and justification. It is the comparative spirit which is at work everywhere, and which has achieved the greatest triumphs in modern times. But we must not forget that comparison, in order to be fruitful, must be joined with distinction, otherwise we fall into that dangerous habit of seeing cromlechs wherever there are some upright stones and another laid across, or a dolmen wherever we meet with a stone with a hole in it.

We have heard a great deal lately in Germany, and in England also, of Tree-worship and Serpent-worship. Nothing can be more useful than a wide collection of analogous facts, but their true scientific interest begins only when we can render to ourselves an account of how, beneath their apparent similarity, there exists the greatest diversity of origin.

It is the same in Comparative

Philology. There is grammar everywhere, even in the languages of the lowest races; but if we attempt to force our grammatical terminology, our nominatives and accusatives, our actives and passives, our gerunds and supines, upon every language, we lose the chief lesson which a comparative study of language is to teach us, and we fail to see how the same object can be realised, and was realised, in a hundred different ways, in a hundred different languages. Here, better than anywhere else, the old Latin saying applies: *Si duo dicunt idem, non est idem*, "If two people say the same thing, it is not the same thing."

If there is fetish-worship everywhere, the fact is curious, but it gains a really scientific value only if we can account for the fact. How a fetish came to be a fetish, that is the problem which has to be solved, and as soon as we attack fetishism in that spirit, we shall find that, though being apparently the same everywhere, its antecedents are seldom the same anywhere. There is no fetish without its antecedents, and it is in these antecedents alone that its true and scientific interest consists.

Let us consider only a few of the more common forms of what has been called fetishism; and we shall soon see from what different heights and depths its sources spring. If the bones or the ashes, or the hair of a departed friend are cherished as reliques, if they are kept in sacred places, if they are now and then looked at, or even spoken to, by true mourners in their loneliness, all this may be called fetish-worship.

Again, if a sword once used by a valiant warrior, if a banner which had led their fathers to victory, if a stick, or let us call it a sceptre, if a calabash, or let us call it a drum, are greeted with respect or enthusiasm by soldiers when going to do battle themselves, all this may be called fetish-worship. Again, if these banners and swords are blessed by priests, or if the spirits of those who had carried them

in former years are invoked, as if they were still present, all this may be put down as fetishism. If the defeated soldier breaks his sword across his knees, or tears his colours, or throws his eagles away, he may be said to be punishing his fetish; nay, Napoléon himself may be called a fetish-worshipper when, pointing to the pyramids, he said to his soldiers, "From the summit of these monuments forty centuries look down upon you, soldiers!" No, we cannot possibly distinguish too much, if we want not only to know, but to understand the ancient customs of savage nations. Sometimes a stock or a stone was worshipped, because it was a forsaken altar, or an ancient place of judgment;¹ sometimes because it marked the place of a great battle or a murder;² sometimes because it protected the sacred boundaries of clans or families; sometimes because it marked the place where a king had been buried. There are stones from which weapons can be made; there are stones on which weapons can be sharpened; there are stones, like the jade found in Swiss lakes, that must have been brought as heirlooms from great distances; there are meteoric stones fallen from the sky. Are all these simply to be labelled fetishes, because, for very good reasons, they were treated with some kind of reverence by ancient and even by modern people?

Sometimes the fact that a crude stone is worshipped as the image of a god may show a higher power of abstraction than the worship paid to the master-works of Phidias; sometimes the worship paid to a stone slightly resembling the human form may mark a very low stage of religious feeling. If we are satisfied with calling all this and much more simply fetishism, we shall soon be told, that the stone on which all the kings of England have been crowned is an old fetish, and that in the coronation of Queen Victoria we ought to

¹ *Paus.* i. 28, 5.

² *Ibid.* viii. 13, 3; x. 5, 4.

recognise a survival of Anglo-Saxon fetishism.

Matters have at last gone so far that people travelling in Africa actually cross-examine the natives whether they believe in *fetishes*, as if the poor negro or the Hottentot, or the Papua could have any idea of what is meant by such a word! Native African words for fetish are *gri-gri*, *gru-gru*, or *ju-ju*, all of them possibly the same word.¹ I must quote at least one story, showing how far superior the examinee may sometimes be to the examiners. "A negro was worshipping a tree, supposed to be his fetish, with an offering of food, when some European asked whether he thought that the tree could eat. The negro replied: 'Oh, the tree is not the fetish, the fetish is a spirit and invisible, but he has descended into this tree. Certainly he cannot devour our bodily food, but he enjoys its spiritual part, and leaves behind the bodily part, which we see.'" The story is almost too good to be true, but it rests on the authority of Halleur,² and it may serve at least as a warning against our interpreting the sacrificial acts of so-called savage people by one and the same rule, and against our using technical terms so ill-chosen and so badly defined as fetishism.

Confusion becomes still worse confounded when travellers, who have accustomed themselves to the most modern acceptations of the word fetish, who use it, in fact, in the place of God, write their accounts of the savage races, among whom they have lived, in this modern jargon. Thus Bastian tells us that "the natives say that the great fetish of Bamba lives in the bush, where no man sees him or can see him. When he dies, the fetish-priests carefully collect his bones, in

¹ Waitz, ii. p. 175. F. Schultze states that the negroes adopted that word from the Portuguese. Bastian gives *enquist* as a name for fetish on the West Coast of Africa; also *mokissso* (Bastian, *St. Salvador*, pp. 254, 81).

² *Das Leben der Neger West-Africa's*, p. 40. Cf. Waitz, vol. i. p. 188. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, ii. 197.

order to revive them and nourish them; till they again acquire flesh and blood." Now here "the great fetish" is used in the Comtian sense of the word; it means no longer *fetish*, but deity. A fetish that lives in the bush and cannot be seen is the very opposite of the *feitigo*, or the *gru-gru*, or whatever name we may choose to employ for those material and visible subjects which are worshipped by men, not only in Africa, but in the whole world, during a certain phase of their religious consciousness.

Though our knowledge of the religion of the negroes is still very imperfect, yet I believe I may say that, wherever there has been an opportunity of ascertaining the religious sentiments even of the lowest savage tribes, no tribe has ever been found without something beyond mere worship of so-called fetishes. I do not mean to dispute away the fact that a worship of visible material objects is widely spread among African tribes, far more widely than anywhere else. We can perfectly well understand that both the intellectual and sentimental tendencies of the negro pre-eminently pre-dispose him to that kind of degraded worship. What I maintain is, that fetishism was a corruption of religion, that the negro is capable of higher religious ideas than the worship of stocks and stones, and that the same people who believed in fetishes, cherished at the same time very pure, very exalted, very true sentiments of the deity. Only we must have eyes to see, eyes that can see what is perfect without dwelling too much on what is imperfect. The more I study heathen religions, the more I feel convinced that, if we want to form a true judgment of their purpose, we must measure them, as we measure the Alps, by the highest point which they have reached. Religion is everywhere an aspiration rather than a fulfilment, and I claim no more for the religion of the negro than for our own, when I say that it should be judged, not by what it appears to be, but by what it is—

nay, not only by what it is, but by what it can be, and by what it has been in its most gifted votaries.

Whatever can be done under present circumstances to gain an approximate idea of the real religion of the African negroes, has been done by Waitz in his classical work on Anthropology.¹ Waitz, the editor of Aristotle's *Organon*, approached his subject in a truly scholarlike spirit. He was not only impartial himself, but he carefully examined the impartiality of his authorities before he quoted their opinions. His work is well known in England, where many of his facts and opinions have found so charming an interpreter in Mr. Tylor. The conclusions at which Waitz arrived with regard to the true character of the religion of the negroes may be stated in his own words:—

"The religion of the negro is generally considered as a peculiar crude form of polytheism and marked with the special name of fetishism. A closer inspection of it, however, shows clearly that, apart from certain extravagant and fantastic features which spring from the character of the negro and influence all his doings, his religion, as compared with those of other uncivilised people, is neither very peculiar nor exceptionally crude. Such a view could only be taken, if we regarded the outward side only of the negro's religion or tried to explain it from gratuitous antecedents. A more profound investigation, such as has lately been successfully carried out by several eminent scholars, leads to the surprising result that several negro tribes, who cannot be shown to have experienced the influence of any more highly civilised nations, have progressed much further in the elaboration of their religious ideas than almost all other uncivilised races; so far indeed that, if we do not like to call them monotheists, we may at least say of them, that they have come very near to the boundaries of true monotheism, although their religion is mixed up with a large quantity of coarse superstitions, which with some other people seem almost to choke all pure religious ideas."

Waitz himself considers Wilson's book on West Africa, its History, Condition, and Prospects (1856), as one of the best, but he has collected his materials likewise from many other sources, and particularly from

the accounts of missionaries. Wilson was the first to point out that what we have chosen to call fetishism is something very distinct from the real religion of the negro, that there is ample evidence to show that the same tribes, who are represented as fetish-worshippers, believe either in gods, or in a supreme good God, the creator of the world, and that they possess in their dialects particular names for him.

Sometimes it is said that no worship is paid to that Supreme Being, but to fetishes only. This, however, may arise from different causes. It may arise from an excess of reverence, quite as much as from negligence. Thus the Odjis² or Ashantis call the Supreme Being by the same name as the sky, but they mean by it a personal God, who, as they say, created all things, and is the Giver of all good things. But though he is omnipresent and omniscient, knowing even the thoughts of men, and pitying them in their distress, the government of the world is, as they believe, deputed by him to inferior spirits, and among these again it is the malevolent spirits only who require worship and sacrifice from man.³

Cruickshank⁴ calls attention to the same feature in the character of the negroes on the Gold Coast. He thinks that their belief in a supreme God, who has made the world and governs it, is very old, but he adds that they invoke him very rarely, calling him "their great friend," or "He who has made us." Only when in great distress they call out, "We are in the hands of God; he will do what seemeth right to him." This view is confirmed by the Basle missionaries,⁵ who cannot certainly be suspected of partiality. They also affirm that their belief in a supreme God is by no means without influence on the negroes. Often, when in deep

² Waitz, ii. p. 171.

³ Riis, *Baseler Missions-berichte*, 1847, iv. 244, 248; Waitz, ii. 171.

⁴ Cruickshank, p. 217, quoted by Waitz, ii. p. 172.

⁵ *Baseler Missions-berichte*, 1855, i. p. 88; Waitz, ii. p. 173.

distress, they say to themselves, "God is the old one, he is the greatest; he sees me; I am in his hand." The same missionary adds, "If, besides this faith, they also believe in thousands of fetishes, this, unfortunately, they share in common with many Christians."

The Odjis or Ashantis,¹ while retaining a clear conception of God as the high or the highest, the creator, the giver of sunshine, rain, and all good gifts, the omniscient, hold that he does not condescend to govern the world, but that he has placed created spirits as lords over hills and vales, forests and fields, rivers and the sea. These are conceived as like unto men, and are occasionally seen, particularly by the priests. Most of them are good, but some are evil spirits, and it seems that in one respect at least these negroes rival the Europeans, admitting the existence of a supreme evil spirit, the enemy of men, who dwells apart in a world beyond.²

Some of the African names given to the Supreme Being meant originally sun, sky, giver of rain; others mean Lord of Heaven, Lord and King of Heaven, the invisible creator. As such he is invoked by the Yebus,³ who, in praying to him, turn their faces to the ground. One of their prayers was—"God in Heaven, guard us from sickness and death; God, grant us happiness and wisdom."

The Ediyahs of Fernando Po⁴ call the Supreme Being *Rupi*, but admit many lesser gods as mediators between him and man. The Duallahs,⁵ on the Cameruns, have the same name for the Great Spirit and the sun.

The Yorubas believe in a Lord of Heaven, whom they call *Olorun*.⁶ They believe in other gods also, and they speak of a place called Ife, in the district of Kakanda (5° E. L. Gr. 8°

¹ Waitz, ii. p. 171.

² *Ibid.* ii. pp. 173, 174.

³ *Ibid.* ii. p. 168; D'Avezac, p. 84, note 3.

⁴ *Ibid.* ii. p. 168.

⁵ Allen and Thomson, *Narrative of the Expedition to the River Niger in 1841*, ii. pp. 192, 395, note.

⁶ Tucker, p. 192, note.

N. lat.), as the seat of the gods, a kind of Olympus, from whence sun and moon always return after having been buried in the earth, and from whence men also are believed to have sprung.⁷

Among the people of Akra we are told by Römer,⁸ that a kind of worship was paid to the rising sun. Zimmerman⁹ denies that any kind of worship is paid there to casual objects (commonly called fetishes), and we know from the reports of missionaries that their name for the highest god is *Jongmaa*,¹⁰ which signifies both rain and god. This *Jongmaa* is probably the same as *Nyongmo*, the name for God on the Gold Coast. There too it means the sky, which is everywhere, and has been from everlasting. A negro, who was himself a fetish priest, said, "Do we not see daily how the grass, the corn, and the trees grow by the rain and the sunshine which he sends! How should he not be the creator?" The clouds are said to be his veil; the stars, the jewels on his face. His children are the *Wong*, the spirits which fill the air and execute his commands on earth. These *Wongs*, which have likewise been mistaken for fetishes, constitute a very important element in many ancient religions, not only in Africa; they step in everywhere where the distance between the human and the divine has become too wide, and where something intermediate, or certain mediators, are wanted to fill the gap which man has created himself. On the Gold Coast¹¹ it is believed that these *Wongs* dwell between heaven and earth, that they have children, die, and rise again. There is a *Wong* for the sea and all that is therein; there are other *Wongs* for rivers, lakes, and springs; there are others for pieces of land which have

⁷ Tucker, *Abbeokuta; or, An Outline of the Origin and Progress of the Yoruba Mission*, 1856, p. 248.

⁸ Römer, *Nachrichten von der Küste Guinea*, 1769, p. 84.

⁹ Zimmerman, *Grammatical Sketch of the Akra or Ga Language, Vocabulary*, p. 337.

¹⁰ *Baseler Missions-mag.*, 1837, p. 559.

¹¹ Waitz, ii. p. 183.

been inclosed, others for the small heaps of earth thrown up to cover a sacrifice ; others, again, for certain trees, for certain animals, such as crocodiles, apes, and serpents, while other animals are only considered as sacred to the Wongs. There are Wongs for the sacred images carved by the fetishman, lastly for anything made of hair, bones, and thread, and offered for sale as talismans.¹ Here we see clearly the difference between Wongs and fetishes, the fetish being the outward sign, the Wong the indwelling spirit, though, no doubt, here too the spiritual might soon have dwindled down into a Real Presence.² In Akwapim the word which means both God and weather is Jankkupong. In Bonny, also, and in Eastern Africa among the Makuas, one and the same word is used to signify God, heaven, and cloud.³ In Dahomey the sun is said to be supreme, but receives no kind of worship.⁴ The Ibos believe in a maker of the world whom they call Tshuku. He has two eyes and two ears, one in the sky and one on the earth. He is invisible, and he never sleeps. He hears all that is said, but he can reach those only who draw near unto him.⁵ Can anything be more simple and more true ? He can reach those only who draw near unto him ! Could we say more ? Good people, it is believed, will see him after death, bad people go into fire. Do not some of us say the same ? That some of the negroes are aware of the degrading character of fetish worship is shown by the people of Akra declaring the monkeys only to be fetish worshippers.⁶

I cannot vouch for the accuracy of every one of these statements for reasons which I have fully explained. I accept them on the authority of a scholar who was accustomed to the

¹ *Baseler Missions-mag.*, 1856, ii. 131.

² Waitz, ii. pp. 174, 175.

³ Kölner, *Einige Notizen über Bonny*, 1848, p. 61 ; Waitz, ii. p. 169.

⁴ Salt, *Voyage to Abyssinia*, 1814, p. 41.

⁵ Schön and Crowther, *Journal of an Expedition up the Niger*, in 1842, pp. 51, 72.

⁶ Waitz, ii. pp. 174-178.

collation of various readings in ancient MSS., Professor Waitz. Taken together, they certainly give a very different impression of the negroes from that which is commonly received. They show at all events that, so far from being a uniform fetishism, the religion of the negro is many-sided in the extreme. There is fetish worship in it, perhaps more than among other nations, but there are in it also very clear traces of a worship of spirits residing in different parts of nature, and of a feeling after a supreme spirit, hidden and revealed by the sun or the sky. It is generally, if not always, the sun or the sky which forms the bridge from the visible to the invisible, from nature to nature's God. But besides the sun, the moon⁷ also was worshipped by the negroes, as the ruler of months and seasons, and the ordainer of time and life. Sacrifices were offered under trees, soon also to trees, particularly to old trees which for generations had witnessed the joys and troubles of a family or a tribe. Besides Physiometry, there are clear indications also of Zoolatry.⁸ It is one of the most difficult problems to discover the motive which led the negro to worship certain animals. The mistake which is made by most writers on early religions is that they imagine there can be but one motive for each custom that has to be explained. Generally, however, there are many. Sometimes the souls of the departed are believed to dwell in certain animals. In some places animals, particularly wolves, are made to devour the dead bodies, and they may in consequence be considered sacred.⁹ Monkeys are looked upon as men, slightly damaged at the creation, sometimes also as men thus punished for their sins. They are in some places believed to be able to speak, but to sham dumbness in order to escape labour. Hence, it may be, a reluctance arose to kill them, like other

⁷ Waitz, ii. p. 175. ⁸ *Ibid.* ii. p. 177.

⁹ *Ibid.* ii. 177. Hostmann, *Zur Geschichte des Nordischen Systems der drei Culturperioden*. Braunschweig, 1875, p. 13, note.

animals, and from this there would be but a small step to ascribing to them a certain sacro-sanctity. Elephants, we know, inspire similar feelings by the extraordinary development of their understanding. People do not like to kill them, or if they have to do it, they ask pardon from the animal which they have killed. In Dahomey, where the elephant is a natural fetish, many purificatory ceremonies have to be performed when an elephant has been slain.¹

In some places it is considered lucky to be killed by certain animals, as for instance by leopards in Dahomey.

There are many reasons why snakes might be looked upon with a certain kind of awe, and even kept and worshipped. Poisonous snakes are dreaded, and may therefore be worshipped, particularly after they had been (perhaps secretly) deprived of their fangs. Other snakes are useful as domestic animals, as weather prophets, and may therefore have been fed, valued, and, after a time, worshipped, taking that word in that low sense which it often has, and must have among uncivilised people. The idea that the ghosts of the departed dwell for a time in certain animals is very widely prevalent; and considering the habits of certain snakes, hiding in deserted and even in inhabited houses, and suddenly appearing, peering at the inhabitants with their wondering eyes, we may well understand the superstitious awe with which they were treated. Again, we know that many tribes assumed in modern and ancient times, the name of Snakes (Nágas), whether in order to assert their autochthonic right to the country in which they lived, or because, as Diodorus supposes, the snake had been used as their banner, their rallying sign, or as we should say their totem or crest. As the same Diodorus points out, people may have chosen the snake for their banner, either because it was their deity, or it may have become

their deity, because it was their banner. At all events nothing would be more natural than that people who, for some reason or other, called themselves Snakes, should in time adopt a snake for their ancestor, and finally for their god. In India the snakes assume at an early time, a very prominent part in epic and popular traditions. They soon became what fairies or bogies are in our nursery tales, and they appear in company with Gandharvas, Apsaras, Kinnaras, &c., in some of the most ancient architectural ornamentalations of India. Totally different from these Indian snakes is the snake of the Zendavesta, and the snake of Genesis, and the dragons of Greek and Teutonic mythology. There is lastly the snake as a symbol of eternity, either on account of its leaving its skin, or because it rolls itself up into a complete circle. Every one of these creatures of fancy has a biography of its own, and to mix them all up together would be like writing one biography of all the people who were called Alexander.

Africa is full of animal fables, in the style of *Aesop's fables*, though they are not found among all tribes; and it is often related that, in former times, men and animals could converse together. In Bornu it is said that one man betrayed the secret of the language of animals to his wife, and that thenceforth the intercourse ceased.² Man alone is never, we are told, worshipped in the true sense of the word; and if in some places powerful chiefs receive the greatest honours, this is no more than what was seen at Rome during the most brilliant time of Augustus and his successors. Men who are deformed, dwarfs, albinos and others, are frequently looked upon as something strange and uncanny, rather than what we should call sacred.

Lastly, great reverence is paid to the spirits of the departed,³ and their bones also are frequently preserved and treated with religious respect. The Ashantis

¹ Waitz, ii. p. 178.

² Kölle, 145.

³ Waitz, ii. 181.

have a word, *kla*,¹ which means the life of man. If used as a masculine, it stands for the voice that tempts man to evil ; if used in the feminine, it is the voice that persuades us to keep aloof from evil. Lastly *kla* is the tutelary genius of a person who can be brought near by witchcraft, and expects sacrifices for the protection which he grants. When a man dies, his *kla* becomes *sisa*, and a *sisa* may be born again.

Now I ask, is so many-sided a religion to be classed simply as African *fetish-worship*? Do we not find almost every ingredient of other religions in the little which we know at present of the faith and worship of the negro ? Is there the slightest evidence to show that there ever was a time when these negroes were fetish-worshippers only, and nothing else ? Does not all our evidence point rather in the opposite direction, viz., that fetishism was a parasitical development, intelligible with certain antecedents, but never as an original impulse of the human heart ?

What is, from a psychological point of view, the really difficult problem, is how to reconcile the rational and even exalted religious opinions, traces of which we discovered among many of the negro tribes, with the coarse forms of fetish worship. We must remember, however, that every religion is a compromise between the wise and the foolish, the old and the young, and that the higher the human mind soars in its search after divine ideals, the more inevitable the symbolical representations, which are required for children and for the majority of people, incapable of realising sublime and subtle abstractions.

Not only Greek and Roman religion, but our own Christian religion too is surrounded by fetish worship. The Palladium at Troy, which was supposed to have fallen from the sky, and was believed to make the town impregnable, may be called a fetish, and like a fetish it had to be stolen by Odysseus and

Diomedes, before Troy could be taken. Pausanias² states that in ancient times the images of the gods in Greece were rude stones, and he mentions such stones as still existing in his time, in the second century of our era. At Pharae he tells us of thirty square stones (*hermæ* !), near the statue of Hermes, which the people worshipped, giving to each the name of a god. The Thespians who worshipped Eros as the first among gods, had an image of him which was a mere stone.³ The statue of Herakles at Hyettos, was of the same character,⁴ according to the old fashion, as Pausanias himself remarks. In Sicyon he mentions an image of Zeus Melichios, and another of Artemis Patroa, both made without any art, the former a mere pyramid, the latter a column.⁵ At Orchomenos, again he describes a temple of the Graces, in which they were worshipped as rude stones, which were believed to have fallen from the sky at the time of Eteokles. Statues of the Graces were placed in the temple during the life-time of Pausanias.⁶

The same at Rome. Stones which were believed to have fallen from the sky were invoked to grant success in military enterprises.⁷ Mars himself was represented by a spear. Augustus, after losing two naval battles, punished Neptune like a fetish, by excluding his image from the procession of the gods.⁸ Nero was, according to Suetonius, a great despiser of all religion, though for a time he professed great faith in the Dea Syria. This, however, came to an end, and he then treated her image with the greatest indignity. The fact was that some unknown person had given him a small image of a girl, as a protection against plots, and as he discovered a plot against his life immediately afterwards, he began to worship that image as the highest deity, offering sacrifices to it three times every

¹ Baseler, *Missions-mag.*, 1856, ii. 134, 139 ;

Waitz, ii. p. 182.

² Pans. vii. 22. 4. ³ *Ibid.* ix. 27. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.* ix. 24. 3. ⁵ *Ibid.* ii. 9. 6.

⁶ *Ibid.* ix. 38. 1. ⁷ Plin. H. N., 37, 9.

⁸ Suetonius, Aug.

day, and declaring that it enabled him to foresee the future.¹

If all this had happened at Timbuktu, instead of Rome, should we not call it fetishism?

Lastly, to turn to Christianity, is it not notorious what treatment the images of saints receive at the hands of the lower classes in Roman Catholic countries? Della Valle² relates that Portuguese sailors fastened the image of St. Anthony to the bowsprit, and then addressed him kneeling, with the following words, "O St. Anthony, be pleased to stay there till thou hast given us a fair wind for our voyage." Freziers³ writes of a Spanish captain who tied a small image of the Virgin Mary to the mast, declaring that it should hang there till it had granted him a favourable wind. Kotzebue⁴ declares that the Neapolitans whip their saints, if they do not grant their requests. Russian peasants, we are told, cover the face of an image, when they are doing anything unseemly, nay, they even borrow their neighbours' saints, if they have proved themselves particularly successful. All this, if seen by a stranger, would be set down as fetishism, and yet what a view is opened before our eye, if we ask ourselves, how such worship paid to an image of the Virgin Mary or of a saint became possible in Europe? Why should it be so entirely different among the negroes of Africa? Why should all their fetishes be, as it were, of yesterday? And why should a worship paid to images, to relics, and symbols of all kinds find so many excuses when met with in Europe, while it is branded as fetishism and idolatry in Africa?

Much, no doubt, may be said in explanation, even in excuse of fetishism, under all its forms and disguises. It often assists our weakness, it often

reminds us of our duties, it often may lead our thoughts from material objects to spiritual visions, it often comforts us when nothing else will give us peace. Anyhow, it seems so harmless, that it is difficult to see why it should have been so fiercely reprobated by some of the wisest teachers of mankind. It may have seemed strange to many of us, that among the Ten Commandments which were to set forth, in the shortest possible form, the highest, the most essential duties of man, the second place should be assigned to a prohibition of any kind of images. "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth: thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them."

Let those who wish to understand the hidden wisdom of these words, study the history of ancient religions. Let them read the descriptions of religious festivals in Africa, in America, and Australia, let them witness also the pomp and display in some of our own Christian churches and cathedrals. No arguments can prove that there is anything very wrong in all these outward signs and symbols. To many people, we know, they are even a help and comfort. But history is sometimes a stronger and sterner teacher than argument, and one of the lessons which the history of religions certainly teaches is this, that the curse pronounced against those who would change the invisible into the visible, the spiritual into the material, the divine into the human, the Infinite into the Finite, has come true in every nation on earth. We may consider ourselves safe against the fetish worship of the poor negro; but there are few of us, if any, who have not their own fetishes, or their own idols, whether in their churches, or in their hearts.

Fetishism then, far from being, as we are told by almost every writer on the history of religions, a primitive form of faith, is on the contrary, so far as

¹ Suetonius, *Nero*, c. 55.

² *Voyage*, vii. 409; Meiners, i. p. 181; F. Schultze, *Fetishismus*, p. 175.

³ *Relation du Voyage de la Mer du Sud*, p. 248. F. Schultze, l. c.

⁴ *Reise nach Rom*, T. ii. p. 327.

facts enable us to judge, a secondary or tertiary formation, nay a decided corruption of an earlier and simpler religion. If we want to find the true springs of religious ideas, we must mount higher. Stocks and stones were not the first to reveal the Infinite before the wondering eyes of men.

After carefully going through the whole of the evidence placed before us by the upholders of the fetish theory, we have arrived at the following two conclusions:—

First, That there are few, if any, well authenticated cases of savage tribes whose religion consists of fetish worship and of fetish worship only.

Secondly, That there is hardly any religion, however exalted in its original character, which has kept itself entirely free from the parasitical growth of fetish worship.

It has been pointed out to me, however, by some believers in fetishism—or, I should rather say, in the Comtian theory of fetishism—that all this would affect the question of fact only, and that there is a far more formidable theory to be encountered, before it could be admitted that the first impulse to religion proceeded from a sentiment of the Infinite surrounding us on every side, and not from sentiments of surprise or fear called forth by such finite things as shells, stones, or bones—that is to say, by fetishes.

We are told that whatever the *facts* may be which, after all, by mere accident, are still within our reach, as bearing witness to the earliest phases of religious thought, there *must* have been a time, whether in historic or prehistoric periods, whether during the formation of quaternary or tertiary strata, when man worshipped stocks and stones, and nothing else.

I am far from saying that under certain circumstances mere argumentative reasoning may not be as powerful as historical evidence; still I thought I had done enough by showing how the very tribes who were represented to us as living instances of fetish-

worship possessed religious ideas of a simplicity and, sometimes, of a sublimity such as we look for in vain even in Homer and Hesiod. However, as it is dangerous to leave any fortress in our rear, it may be expedient to reply to this view of fetishism also, though in as few words as possible.

It may be taken for granted that those who hold the theory that religion must everywhere have taken its origin from fetishism, take fetish in the sense of casual objects which for some reason or other, or it may be for no reason at all, were considered as endowed with exceptional power, and gradually raised to the dignity of spirits or gods. They could not hold the other view, that fetish was, from the beginning, an emblem or symbol only, an outward sign or token of some power previously known, which power, originally distinct from the fetish, was afterwards believed to reside in it, and in course of time came to be identified with it. For in that case the real problem for those who study the growth of the human mind would be the origin and growth of that power, previously known, and afterwards supposed to reside in a fetish. The real beginning of religious life would be there; the fetish would represent a secondary stage only. Nor is it enough to say (with Professor Zeller) that "fancy or imagination personifies things without life and without reason as gods." The real question is, Whence that imagination? and whence, before all things, that unprovoked and unjustifiable pre-dicate of God?

The theory therefore of fetishism with which alone we have still to deal is this, that it is and must be the first inevitable step in the development of religious ideas. Religion begins, we are told, with a contemplation of stones, shells, bones, and such like things, and from that rises to the conception of something else—of powers, spirits, gods, or whatever else we like to call it.

Let us look this theory in the face. When travellers, ethnologists, and philosophers tell us that savage tribes look upon stones and bones and trees as their gods, what is it that startles us? Not surely the stones, bones, or trees; not the subjects, but that which is predicated of these subjects, viz., God. Stones, bones, and trees are ready at hand everywhere; but what the student of the growth of the human mind wishes to know is, Whence the predicate God? Here lies the whole problem. If a little child were to bring us his cat and say it was a vertebrate animal, the first thing that would strike us would surely be, How did the child ever hear of such a name as a vertebrate animal? If the fetish worshipper brings us a stone and says it is a god, our question is the same, Where did you ever hear of God, and what do you mean by such a name? It is curious to observe how little that difficulty seems to have been felt by writers on ancient religion. We are told, for instance, that we can watch a very primitive state of religion among the Fijians:—that they regard the shooting-stars as gods, and the smaller ones as the departing souls of men. Before we can make any use of such a statement, ought we not to know, first, what is the exact name and concept of god among the Fijians; and secondly, of what objects besides shooting-stars that name is predicated? Are we to suppose that the whole idea of the Divine which the Fijians had formed to themselves is concentrated in shooting-stars? Or does the statement mean only that the Fijians look upon shooting-stars as one manifestation out of many of a Divine power well known to them from other sources? If so, then all depends clearly on what these other sources are, and how from them the name and concept of something divine could have sprung.

When we are told that the poets of the Veda represent the sun as a god, we ask what is their name for god, and we are told *deva*, which originally

meant *bright*. The biography of that single word *deva* would fill a volume, and not until we know that biography would the statement that the Hindus consider the sun as a *deva*, convey to us any real meaning.

The same applies to the statement that the Fijians or any other races look upon shooting-stars as the departing souls of men. Are the shooting-stars the souls, or the souls the shooting-stars? Surely all depends here on the meaning conveyed by the word *soul*. How did they come by that word? What was its original intention? These are the questions which ethnological psychology has to ask and to answer before it can turn with any advantage to the numerous anecdotes which we find collected in works on the study of man.

What meaning shall we attach, for instance, to such a statement as that Benin negroes regard their shadows as their souls? If soul is here used in the English sense of the word, then the negroes could never believe their souls to be no more than their shadows. That would be saying that *a* (i.e. shadow) is equal to *a* (i.e. shadow), but they want to say that *a* (shadow) is equal to something else, viz., *b* (soul). It is true that we also do not always see clearly what we mean by soul; but what we mean by it could never be the same as mere shadow only. Unless therefore we are told whether the Benin negroes mean by their word for soul the *anima*, the breath, the token of life; or the *animus*, the mind, the principle of thought; or the *soul*, as the seat of desires and passions; unless we know whether their so-called soul is material or immaterial, visible or invisible, mortal or immortal, the mere information that certain savage tribes look upon the shadow, or a bird, or a shooting-star as their soul seems to me to teach us nothing.

It is a totally different thing when ethnological psychology teaches us how, for instance, out of the observation of the shadow, which stays with us by

day and seems to leave us by night, the idea of a second self arose; how that idea was united with another, namely, that of breath, which stays with us during life, and seems to leave us at the moment of death; and how out of these two ideas the concept of a something, separate from the body and yet endowed with life, was slowly elaborated. Here we can watch a real transition from the visible to the invisible, from the material to the immaterial; but instead of saying that people, in that primitive stage of thought, believe their souls to be shadows, all we should be justified in saying would be that they believed that, after death, their breath, having left the body, would reside in something like the shadow that follows them during life.

Let us apply this to the ordinary theory of fetishism, and we shall see that the problem is really this: Can spirits or gods spring from stones? Or, to put it more clearly, Can we understand how there should be a transition from the percept of a stone to the concept of a spirit or a god?¹

Before we proceed, however, we must stop once more, in order to make the ground on which our argument is to proceed quite safe. De Brosses, as we saw, imagined that the name *feitiço* was somehow related to *fatum*, and its modern derivative *fata* (a nom. plur. of the neuter, used afterwards as a nom. sing. of the feminine), a *fée*, a fairy.

This made it appear less incongruous to him to apply the name of fetish, not only to material or artificial abjects, but also to trees, mountains, and rivers. The worship of trees, mountains, and rivers, however, is, psychologically considered, something totally different from the worship of *feitiços*, of factitious things, whether bones, stones, or shells, or mere rags and tags, of which one very pious worshipper is said to have amassed no less than 20,000.²

Wherever there is fetish or rubbish worship, there, no doubt, trees also

and rivers and mountains may fall, after a time, into the same category. But the antecedents of these two classes of fetishes—and it is the antecedents only for which we care—are totally distinct. We shall have to examine very carefully the process, which I call the *theogonic* process, by which the percepts of trees, rivers, and mountains become gradually changed into concepts of something else. The chief object, in fact, of these lectures will be to discover the transition from certain visible objects to something invisible, from the sensuous to the supersensuous, and from thence into the vast realm of the spiritual, the immortal, the divine.

We are told that nothing is easier than this transition, if we only accept fetishism as the primordial form of faith. But how? We are asked to imagine a state of mind when man, as yet without any ideas beyond those supplied to him by his five senses, suddenly sees a glittering stone or a bright shell, picks it up as strange, keeps it as dear to himself, and then persuades himself that this stone is not a stone like other stones, that this shell is not a shell like other shells, but that it is endowed with extraordinary powers, which no other stone or shell ever possessed before. We are asked to suppose that possibly the stone was picked up in the morning, that the man who picked it up was engaged in a serious fight during the day, that he came out of it victorious, and that he very naturally ascribed to the stone the secret of his success. He would afterwards, so we are told, have kept that stone for luck; it might very likely have proved lucky more than once; in fact, those stones only which proved lucky more than once would have had a chance of surviving as fetishes. It would then have been believed to possess some supernatural power, to be not a mere stone but something else, a powerful spirit, entitled to every honour and worship which the lucky possessor could bestow on it or on him.

¹ Waitz, ii. 187.

² Tylor, ii. 145.

This whole process, we are assured, is perfectly rational in its very irrationality. Nor do I deny it; I only doubt whether it exhibits the irrationality of an uncultured mind. Is not the whole process of reasoning as here described far more in accordance with modern than with ancient and primitive thoughts? Nay, I ask, can we conceive it as possible except when men are already far advanced in the race after the Divine, and in full possession of those very concepts, the origin of which we want to have explained to us?

It was formerly supposed that the psychological problem involved in fetishism could be explained by a mere reference to children playing with their dolls, or hitting the chair against which they had hit themselves. This explanation, however, has long been surrendered, for, even supposing that fetishism consisted only in ascribing to material objects life, activity, or personality, call it figurism, animism, personification, anthropomorphism, or anthropopathism, the mere fact that children do the same as grown-up savages cannot possibly help us to solve the psychological problem. The fact, suppose it is a fact, would be as mysterious with children as with savages. Besides, though there is some truth in calling savages children, or children savages, we must here, too, learn to distinguish. Savages are children in some respects, but not in all. There is no savage who, on growing up, does not learn to distinguish between animate and inanimate objects, between a rope, for instance, and a serpent. To say that they remain childish on such a point is only to cheat ourselves with our own metaphors. On the other side, children, such as they now are, can help us but rarely to gain an idea of what primitive savages may have been. Our children, from the first awakening of their mental life, are surrounded by an atmosphere saturated with the thoughts of an advanced civilisation. A child, not taken in by a well-dressed

doll, or so perfectly able to control himself as not to kick against a chair against which he had hit his head, would be a little philosopher rather than a savage just emerging from fetishism. The circumstances or the surroundings are so totally different in the case of the savage and the child, that comparisons between the two must be carried out with the greatest care before they can claim any real scientific value.

I agree so far with the believers in primitive fetishism that if we are to explain religion as a universal property of mankind, we must explain it out of conditions which are universally present. Nor do I blame them if they decline to discuss the problem of the origin of religion with those who assume a primitive revelation, or a religious faculty which distinguishes man from the animal. Let us start, by all means, from common ground and from safe ground. Let us take man such as he is, possessing his five senses, and as yet without any knowledge except what is supplied to him by his five senses. No doubt that man can pick up a stone, or a bone, or a shell. But then we must ask the upholders of the primitive fetish theory, How do these people, when they have picked up their stone or their shell, pick up at the same time the concepts of a supernatural power, of spirit, of god, and of worship paid to some unseen being?

We are told that there are four steps—the famous four steps—by which all this is achieved, and the origin of fetishism rendered perfectly intelligible. First, there is a sense of surprise; secondly, an anthropopathic conception of the object which causes surprise; thirdly, the admission of a causal connection between that object and certain effects, such as victory, rain, health; fourthly, a recognition of the object as a power deserving of respect and worship. But is not this rather to hide the difficulties beneath a golden shower of words than to explain them?

Granted that a man may be surprised at a stone or a shell, though they would seem to be the very last things to be surprised at; but what is the meaning of taking an anthropopathic view of a stone or a shell? If we translate it into plain English it means neither more nor less than that, instead of taking a stone to be a stone, like all other stones, we suppose that a particular stone is not an ordinary stone, but endowed with the feelings of a man. Natural as this may sound, when clothed in technical language, when we use long names, such as anthropopathism, anthropomorphism, personification, figurism, nothing would really seem to do greater violence to common sense, or to our five senses, than to say that a stone is a stone, yet not quite a stone; and again, that the stone is a man, yet not quite a man. I am fully aware that, after a long series of intermediate steps, such contradictions arise in the human mind, but they cannot spring up suddenly; they are not there from the beginning, unless we admit disturbing influences much more extraordinary than a primeval revelation. It is the object of the science of religion to find out by what small and timid steps the human mind advanced from what is intelligible to what at first sight is almost beyond our comprehension. If we take for granted the very thing that has to be explained; if we once admit that it was perfectly natural for the primitive savage to look upon a stone as something human; if we

are satisfied with such words as anthropopathism, or animism, or figurism,—then all the rest no doubt is easy enough. The human stone has every right to be called superhuman, and that is not very far from divine; nor need we wonder that the worship paid to such an object should be more than what is paid to either a stone or to a man—that it too should be superhuman, which is not very far from divine.

My position then is simply this: It seems to me that those who believe in a primordial fetishism take that for granted which has to be proved, viz., that every human being was miraculously endowed with the concept of what forms the predicate of every fetish, call it power, spirit, or god. They have never proved, either as a fact or as a theory, that casual objects, such as stones, shells, the tail of a lion, a tangle of hair, or any such rubbish, possess in themselves a theogonic or god-producing character. They have never proved that there exists at present, or that there existed at any time a religion entirely consisting of fetishism; and they have often depended on evidence which no scholar, no historian, would feel justified to accept. We are therefore, I think, bound to look elsewhere if we wish to discover what were the sensuous impressions that first filled the human mind with a suspicion of the super-sensuous, the infinite, and the divine.

F. MAX MÜLLER.

CHEAP LITERATURE FOR VILLAGE CHILDREN.

EACH year, as Christmas approaches, the newspaper columns are crowded with the names of every kind of story-book for boys and girls of all ages ; and as we turn over the piles of gaily-bound, cleverly-illustrated, and amusing-looking tales, which at that season cover the booksellers' counters, we cordially assent to the oft-repeated assertion of these same newspapers, that, in the matter of juvenile literature, the lot of children of the present time has been cast in good days.¹ The remark, however, is only true in a limited application. These attractive publications are intended for the little people who wear purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day ; but if we turn to the literature provided for the far larger class of children who are less fortunately circumstanced, we shall find little enough upon which to congratulate ourselves. True, the story-books, costing from fourpence to one shilling and sixpence, are nicely got up and pleasing enough to the eye ; nevertheless, with the rarest exceptions, they are of a dullness and insipidity which would hardly be conceived by any who had not suffered under an intimate acquaintance with them.

The difference between these tales and the 3s. 6d. and 5s. volumes which find their way into the hands of the children of the upper classes, is so striking, and so independent of any that need arise from the difference in their cost, that one cannot but be set thinking as to the why and wherefore of a contrast so marked and so offensive to the cottage child. The result of our reflections we propose to give in the following pages.

¹ See three Papers on Children's Literature of the Last Century, by Miss Yonge, in *Macmillan* for July, August, and September, 1869.

We believe that the inferiority of the poor child's store of books to that of his richer neighbour arises from the difference of principle on which the two libraries are constructed. The works intended for the latter are not bought at random, but are carefully chosen on the recommendation of friends or reviews. Educated children are keen critics ; their parents know how disappointed they would be with a book containing distorted representations of child life, stilted language, or obtrusive moral, and they make their purchases accordingly ; whence it ensues that publishers are obliged, at the risk of a dead loss, to see that they provide works which will meet the demand. But as regards the demand, and therefore also the supply of tales for the lower class children, the case is quite different, for all this thoughtful care is absent. The labourer has seldom any sixpences or shillings to spare for buying books, and those which his boy or girl possesses are sure to be school-prizes, or gifts from the family of the Squire or Vicar.

Now the donors have probably had a multitude of like presents to make, and have had no idea of taking the trouble of reading two or three dozen such volumes in order to see if they are worth giving away. They have bought a large number at once, and have then dispensed them as occasion demanded, without a thought as to their contents. Moreover, they have meant their gifts more for the improvement than the amusement of the recipient ; and still further, whether they either improved or amused has remained for ever a secret from them, for since the orthodox "Thank you, ma'am," was spoken, they have never heard anything of the estimation in which they

were held. This system obviously takes from the purchaser all control over the publishers, who are at perfect liberty to pass off on him any rubbish whatsoever, a liberty of which they avail themselves without restraint.

One matter, indeed, is always considered by those who buy story-books for the poor: they must be perfectly "safe"; there must be nothing in them to "set the parish in a flame." That is, they must inculcate the precise shade of religious teaching current in the place. The parishioners of the Low Church clergyman must not be scandalised by reading that "Sister Olive had sat up all night at her embroidery frame in order that the new crimson bookmakers and stoles should be ready for St. Peter's day;" nor must the flock of the ritualistic curate be informed that "the truly Christian child, Ebenezer Jones, repeated the Thanksgiving reverentially after the minister." But the sale for small books would soon fall off if there were not a less troublesome way of insuring this than that of wading through vast numbers of them. No! it is the name of the publisher or Society on the title-page which is the guarantee of their "safeness," to the High Church priest, the Evangelical minister, or the far larger class of Reverends who "hold no extreme views."

We will now, in hopes of inducing at least some of our readers to look into the matter for themselves, and to cease distributing books of which they know nothing, make a few remarks on, and give a few extracts from, some of these stories. Let us look first at the plots: there is this sweeping objection to almost all of them; the good boy is liberally rewarded by praise, presents, and prosperity, generally before sunset; whilst the bad boy is punished by death, mutilation, or some awful visitation from above in as short a period. Surely such teaching as this must be condemned, if on no other grounds than its extreme untruthfulness.

But there is another curious pheno-

menon with regard to the plots, which is this. The same story appears over and over again, with hardly more than a change of names, till to one versed in this literature, the title, and a page or two at the beginning, gives a clue to the rest of the story, which could then be finished by heart.

Has any one ever had a packet from London without finding in it several versions of that most obnoxious tale concerning the pious child of a drunken father, who reclaims his parent, either by praying aloud for him, or by making unwittingly some remark which "pierces him to the heart" just at the moment when he is standing unobserved behind the door?

This appears to us to inculcate the worst possible moral: can anything be so undesirable as to accustom children to regard their elders as subjects for their spiritual ministrations, and must not a child's single-mindedness be utterly destroyed by leading it to expect that the answer to its prayer will come through the impression produced by its own superior sanctity? Take, for example, a leaflet called *Will Father be a Goat, Mother?* In it James Stirling's son, a boy of four, listens to his mother reading Matthew xxv., after which, just as James has arrived, half-drunk, at the usual place of concealment behind the door, "the dear attentive child" raises his head, and gazing in his mother's face with irrepressible "*interest*" (what a word!) asks, "Will father be a goat, then, mother?" James Stirling was apparently gratified at being looked on as an interesting case by his son: a few days after he took the pledge, and became a "Christian philanthropist in humble life."

Far be it from us to say that a child's simple question may not before now have touched the conscience of some evil liver; but for whose benefit, we ask, is this ever-recurring anecdote intended? It can hardly be written in order to suggest to children that they should make religious remarks with a view to being overheard by

their erring parent, but still less, one would think, can it be intended to suggest to the erring parent that he may perhaps some day be struck by a casual observation of his child's, for nothing could be more certain than that after a course of such reading he would stand perfectly unmoved behind the door when his own turn came; instead of "from that day becoming a changed man."

The High Churchman has the best chance of escaping this incident, for it is least in harmony with his teaching; yet even he will surely have one copy of it in his collection, with this difference only, that the reclamation will be effected by his being persuaded by Harry to go to Church, on Easter Day, just to "see the decorations," which he had been helping to put up; and there, the illuminated text over the altar will so strike him that ever after he will "tidy himself up a bit" on Sundays and attend his parish church, to the overwhelming joy of Harry. As a specimen of this, we offer *The Secret* (Masters) to the reader's notice.

Hardly less frequent than the preceding, though otherwise perfectly unobjectionable, is the following plot. A very poor but very virtuous boy, with a sick sister who is pining away for want of strengthening food and medicine, picks up a purse, or else receives a pound which a kind lady gives him by mistake for a shilling. He is assailed by severe mental struggles, for the money in his hand might be the means of saving his invalid sister. All of a sudden, however, a text or hymn occurs to him: he hastens out in search of the rightful owner of his prize; with some difficulty he discovers her, and restores it, explaining in broken accents that "he could not keep it because it would have been wrong." He is then of course patronised, employed, and supported, he and his, ever after. We have four specimens of this story before us at this moment out of but a small pile of books—*Honest Owen*,

Larry Conner's Charge, *The Conscientious Little Boy*, and the *Little Street Sweeper* (the last being the second story in a book called *Ellen and Sarah*).

Another tale that the packet will by no means be without, is that of the good boy who went to service under a godless butler and a vulgar blaspheming footman; who was first beguiled into bad company in the public-house, and afterwards required to assist his boon companions in robbing his master's safe; who then, recollecting some words from his clergyman when he was an innocent child at home, refused; and was struck down or shot the night of the burglary, to recover among good influences in a hospital, and turn over a new leaf; while the footman and his friends serve a term of fourteen years or so in penal servitude.¹

Then there will be an account of the competition for a prize at X school (the writers of these stories can seldom find names for all their places and people), where Anne, the brilliant but wicked girl at the head of the first class, is defeated by the plodding though commendable Jane; and where, just before the bestowal of the prize, Anne either stains with ink the neatly finished shirt which has thrown hers into the shade, or else surreptitiously changes the marks and substitutes it for her own. At the last moment, however, the sin of course finds the sinner out, to the tearful triumph of virtue and the dire confusion of vice.

Nor will the story be absent of the child who longs and dreams, and toils and saves, so as to be able to buy a Bible; but who, just as his store is sufficient meets with some case of destitution and misery, to the relief of which he feels that it is his duty to consecrate his resources. Howbeit, we do not suffer ourselves to be much harrowed, having sufficient confidence in the vigilance of the district-visitor and clergyman to feel sure that his

¹ Vide *James Brown in Service*, and *The Temptation, a Tale*.

generous conduct will shortly be discovered and rewarded.

Besides these, we shall find the anecdote about the disobedient boys who get into a cave by the sea-side and are caught by the rising tide, but who are happily rescued by their father just as the waves begin to "lap their feet ;" and a host of imitations of *Alone in London*, in which some old man or woman adopts a deserted little child, which sheds sunshine around their declining years. As samples we may name *Alice Neville*, and *Adie's Guardian*.

Nearly all the rest will be dissertations against some particular fault, which fault is never allowed to drop out of sight for one moment. In the typical story against vanity in dress, foolish Ellen appears to have no idea except the "bright ribbon" for her hat; her kind aunt never opens her mouth except to blame her for her folly; her right-thinking friend seems to have forgotten every theme except the superiority of brown ribbon to pink; the excellent clergyman happens to preach on sober apparel; the judicious schoolmaster praises the right-thinking friend for her neat dress, and compares her with Ellen, to the disadvantage of the latter; the good ladies from the Hall bewail her evil propensity to her kind aunt, and the neighbours all prophesy a bad end to her career, a prophecy which is inevitably fulfilled, unless an opportune bereavement or typhus fever ensues, to convince her of the nothingness of bright millinery.

From the plots we may turn to the *dramatis persona* required for these tales, which, however, are but few :—1st, The Kind Clergyman; 2nd, Parents or Guardians; 3rd, Hero or Heroine; 4th, His or Her Friend; 5th, Cottage Visitor.

1st. The Kind Clergyman. In the books from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge he is generally an elderly gentleman, with a stout walking-stick and a large white tie, who goes about with a perennial flow of

spiritual admonition for every one. In the High Church books the clergyman is young, energetic, and unvaryingly cheerful; the successor of one of the venerable gentlemen with the walking-stick and white tie. He is more authoritative than his forerunner; he exercises a marvellous influence in the parish, and is in general not nearly so wearisome as his less exalted prototype, being in the habit of mingling a spicie of worldly conversation with his religious talk, for which we are thankful, though we know it is only introduced as a means of winning the refractory. In the publications of the Religious Tract Society the clergyman is conspicuous chiefly by his absence, being kept very much in the background (lest priestcraft should creep in unawares), and his place is supplied by an aged cottager of either sex, dear to all the village, but to those who are not under the spell of his presence, and only read his sayings, intolerably tedious. It would not be fair to expect much versatility of talent from a villager of seventy, but still we cannot help being astonished at the unbroken monotony in the style of his ministrations, and wondering at the ascendancy which he preserves over the minds of his acquaintance. *Old Humphrey's Bundle of Stories* offers a good instance of this aged cottager, in the story of a turn taken one summer's day in the village of Brompton Leas by a "truly cheerful and Christian-hearted old man" named Joel Stokes. This worthy reformer had but one method of opening his conversations, namely, that of putting to every one he met the question, "How do you get on?" a remark which, as the book proudly observes, "may be applied to all," and truly we grow weary enough of its repetition before Stokes's walking powers are exhausted, and he returns to his hearth and home. He first wends his way to the smithy, and asks the blacksmith, "How do you get on?" Norbury, the smith, replies that he "gets on pretty well at the anvil," and Joel departs, reminding him that

it is "all very well to be a first-rate workman," but that he must also remember to "fear the Lord." He next accosts little Martha Bailiss, and inquires how "she gets on"? and exhorts her to remember the text, "Love one another." He then calls at Master Stallert's, the stonemason, and addresses his usual question. Master Stallert is vexed at the time, having just made a mistake and cut a wrong letter on a tombstone. Joel assures him that the greatest mistake he could make would be to "mistake the way to heaven;" and after this assertion, which, however true, does not seem to have been much to the point at the moment, proceeds to Mrs. Winn's, and inquires how she "gets on"? Mrs. Winn, who is old and rheumatic, states that she is very ill, and has little hope of ever being better; so bestowing a parcel of tea, and advising her to go for comfort to the "widow's refuge, the ever-blessed Word of God," he leaves the cottage, and meets Mr. Dobbs jogging along on his pony. "Well, Mr. Dobbs, how do you get on?" he says. The farmer speaks of bad weather, and the harvest; and Joel recommends him to bear in mind that "there is a harvest of another sort near at hand, in which God will gather His sheaves into His heavenly garner." His next victim is the mole-catcher: "How do you get on?" asks Stokes. "There is vermin enough," replies Morris; "but then I get very little money for it." Modestly likening himself and his friend to vermin, Stokes observes that it becomes both of them to take care that "the prince of darkness does not set his traps for them." He next meets the sexton, and greets him with the usual form, "and how do you get on?" The sexton complains of ague-fits; and Joel reminds him of the words of Moses, "Be strong and of a good courage;" after which, the sun having happily set, he is obliged to bring his expedition to a close.

Space forbids us to extract the wise sayings of another venerable cottager,

in *Old Humphrey's Pleasant Pages*. Suffice it to say that Alan Doyle, who "turned all things to account," used to do so in no other method than by moralising for seven lines upon some object in nature, and then quoting four lines of a hymn which applied more or less to the matter of his reflections. We have the benefit of his thoughts and his citation upon six subjects: the trees, the thunder, the clouds, the lambs, the berries, and the birds; the page being further adorned with a picture that has much exercised our imagination, of a little boy in white trousers violently whipping a top! In the same book there is another aged man, whose mind runs equally in one groove, namely, Old Richard, who spends the whole of a long talk with Master Arthur, in telling him the "mistakes of Harry Ford, Mary Rowe, Madam Rice, Squire Smith, Morton the miser, and Andrew Rollins," after which he has apparently nothing to say, as the story abruptly closes with a text and a piece of good advice.

But enough of the clergyman and his substitute. We will now go on to the second of the characters in the children's books, namely, the Parents or Guardians. They are either good or bad. If bad, they never even by mistake speak a kind word, and they never do a kind action, even when it costs them nothing.¹ Finally they are reclaimed, or die a violent death. The good parent is, however, to the reader a far more unwelcome person than the bad one. He spends all his time in reproofing the young. Now gently, now severely, he points out the sins and follies of youth, and wears his subjects threadbare in a manner both tactless and fatiguing. As an example, take Helen's father, in *The Eskdale Herdboy*. His daughter asks an intelligent question, thereby suggesting that all other young people are not equally sensible, so he says: "Many children are so foolish as to be ashamed

¹ *Vide* the wicked father in *George Hardinge*.

to let those they converse with discover that they do not comprehend everything that is said to them, by which means they often imbibe erroneous ideas, and perhaps remain in ignorance on many essential subjects, when, by questioning their friends, they might easily have obtained correct information."

Nor have fathers a monopoly of tediousness; witness Mrs. Granville, in *Arthur Granville; or the Gifts of God*. Arthur rashly exclaims: "Bedtime always comes too soon;" a remark which, seeing that he was, with his "mamma's permission," engaged in the "nice occupation" of searching for texts in which David "praises God for the weather," might have been looked on as rather commendable by some people. But not so thought Mrs. Granville. "Rest is a precious gift of God," she whispered. "How many of your fellow-creatures are at this time, perhaps, longing to enjoy it!"

The same little boy is invited by "mamma" to spend half an hour in "talking of God's mercies." "I should like it very much," he replied. Could anything be more exemplary? Yet even this new pursuit earned him a lecture, for having next day brought his Bible into the room, keeping it behind his back, so that mamma should guess which of "God's mercies" he held in his hands; Mrs. Granville expostulated with him for two pages, beginning: "A less giddy humour would be more becoming at this moment. You know, my child, how I delight in seeing you cheerful at all times, and merry in your play, and that I do not at all object to a noisy game of romps at a proper time and in proper places; but sacred things, Arthur, should be treated with reverence;" and Arthur "needed no further reproof." Indeed, the temper of the children in these books is admirable in the extreme.

Aunts, too, can be quite as bad as fathers and mothers, as, for example, Aunt Esther, in *Aunt Esther and her Niece Jane*:

Aunt Esther. ". . . how thankful we

ought to be that we were born in a Christian land!"

Jane. "If I were a lady, aunt, I would go out to India, and have a school, and teach the black children myself."

Aunt Esther. "Jane! you are too fond of saying what you would do if you were a lady; depend upon it if you do not show kindness as a poor child, you would not as a lady; recollect that some time ago when Biddy asked you to help her with her reading you refused! Pray to God, dear child, to make you humble, and willing to do all the good you can to your schoolfellows, and you may ask Him to take pity on the little black children, and send out kind Christians to teach them to read and understand the Bible. This you may do without being a lady."

It is difficult to convey an idea of the tiresomeness of this style to those who do not read these tales for themselves. Such persons readily admit that passages of the kind we have quoted are terribly prosy, but they say, "It is not fair on the writer to pick out the one or two pieces of the sort from a book," and they refuse to believe that in some of these volumes the same strain is kept up from the first to the last page. We think that they would be convinced would they but read *Arthur Granville*, though it is only fair to add that it is the worst specimen we ever came across.

3rd and 4th. *The Hero, and the Hero's Friend*. One might hope for some variety from this combination, but no! The bad boy, who, like his wicked father, is devoid of a single redeeming quality, has a friend who is almost faultless; whilst the good boy, who strongly resembles his virtuous but argumentative parent, has a friend whose disposition is one of unmixed evil; and thus all the latent possibilities are compressed into the smallest practicable space, and we get no more variety than if, having mixed black with white, we were afterwards to mix white with black. It is an unfortunate

fact, and one certainly not foreseen by the writers of these stories, that the good people in their tales are nearly always so priggish and pedantic as to throw the sympathies of the reader on the wrong side. Who can do otherwise than feel for the persecutors of Richard, in *Try Again*, when we see him thus addressing his schoolmaster, who had been reciting fourteen very dull lines of Sylvester's on the Spider? "I must trouble you to allow me to copy those verses when we get home, as I shall never look on a spider again without very great interest and delight." And when we find him after apparently enjoying a long harangue from the schoolmaster, starting off on his own account, and recapitulating one which he had received from him some time before, saying:—

"You lectured us in school upon sympathy, telling us that we were all brothers, and ought to help one another and that, being schoolfellows meant that we should have fellow-feelings; and then you went on to show that patience with one another's faults was a duty we were called upon to practise, and you appealed to our Lord's all-patient meekness and forbearance under the most severe and cruel injuries. When we were dismissed from school I went into my own little room, and wept very bitterly, for I thought how often I had acted in a manner disgraceful to a Christian; and I prayed God to give me grace to conquer my bad tempers, and to enable me to repay evil with good." Such sentiments, of course, are very right and admirable, but any one who would set them forth in these balanced periods would certainly not find a congenial sphere in a boys' school.

But unattractive as the moral and excellent hero is, his right-thinking friend is still worse. He is generally an egotistical mortal, sadly needing to take example from Mrs. Barrett-Browning's Kate, who—

"Never found fault with you,
Never implied your wrong by her right." . . .
He parades his virtues before the eyes

of his companion, and offers ill-timed advice from his pinnacle of good sense and good conduct in a manner most certain, in real life, to drive his friend along the broad road to ruin. *Uncle Barnaby's Budget* offers two good specimens of this character.

"If I were you, Frank," said Arthur Longley, "I would certainly crop the ears and tail of that Shetland pony: he looks as uncouth as a hermit." [Are we to understand that hermits look "uncouth" in consequence of the length of their ears and tails?]

"Perhaps, if I were you," answered Frank, with a smile, "I should do so, but being myself, I think and feel differently, and therefore I act differently." [What could be more provoking? We can see Frank, and we hate his smile!]

"If I were you, Emily, I should be perfectly ashamed to be seen in that old velvet pelisse."

"Why!" inquired Emily; . . . "I am not aware of any disgrace connected with it; I came by it quite honestly."

We hope that in after years Emily married the smiling Frank; they would have made a suitable couple.

We now pass on to the 5th and last of our *dramatis personæ*, the Cottage Visitor. She assumes different characteristics, according to the religious opinions of the writer. In the books of authors holding "moderate views," she flourishes largely and independently. Of course she is invariably an angel of light, always at hand to echo the clergyman, to back up the aunt, and to applaud the right-thinking friend; and she is generally of high degree, coming down from the Hall to the village to dispense precepts and pudding, counsel and cough-mixture, and to be received everywhere with thanks, smiles, and blessings; for the literature of this particular shade of thought is pre-eminently the advocate of "ordering oneself lowly and reverently to all one's betters:" of walking like John, in the *Eskdale Herdboy*, "near enough to speak to Mr. Martin, yet far enough behind to show his respect;"

and of remembering, like Biddy in *Aunt Esther*, "to be respectful to the gentlefolks, and to mind one's courtesies, and Ma'ams and Sirs." We will not attempt to decide whether it is the good advice or the good food dispensed by the ladies from the Hall which makes them so popular in the cottages: whichever it is, it must be something very acceptable to the poor, as it induces them to overlook the patronising airs and fault-finding tone of their visitors. We cannot help thinking that Tom, in the *Eskdale Herdboy*, must have had a recollection of plum-cake in the past or the anticipation of plum-cake in the future, when he calmly endured Miss Helen's reproofs, in the following conversation. Tom says: "It was Colly, poor fellow, that came and told mammy that daddy had fallen down." "Stop, Tom," cried

Helen, "take care what you say; how could a dog *tell* anybody what had happened to your father? Do you know what a naughty thing it is to fib?" Tom's mother interposes, and explains that though her son should "perhaps not have used the word 'told,' as the dog certainly did not speak, but only barked," yet the substance of his remark was true; and Helen, after hearing the details of Colly's sagacity, observes, "I think, Tom, you meant to tell the truth, but my mamma always bids me be very particular how I express myself when I am relating a story, for fear of being misunderstood. If you had said Colly barked to let your mother know your father was hurt, I should have understood you better and not suspected you of an untruth, which I am very sorry for having done;" and Tom, far from resenting the lecture, promises to come and see Miss Helen at the Manse, and bring her one of his chickens.

In the Low Church publications the Cottage Visitor flourishes less frequently, and is seldom of exalted rank, the rich being looked on with suspicion, as savouring of "worldliness," for which they are, indeed, occasionally,

rebuked with the happiest effects by the aged cottager already mentioned. It is in the High Church tales that she has the most important functions, though in them she is a very different being from the kind lady of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. She never strikes out a line of her own, nor does she ever command respect from her social position, but she works in strict subordination to her parish priest, and earns the love of the cottagers by the unselfishness and devotedness of her life. She is the friend and teacher of the poor in health, and their nurse and comforter in sickness, and performs miracles in the way of influencing and improving them, as indeed she deserves to do, being almost the only character in these books that, though good, is not self-conscious and disagreeable.

So much for the *dramatis personae* of the stories intended for poor children. We would now call the attention of our readers to some peculiarities of language and diction which we have met with in them. We have heard of late a great deal about "the music of the future," and we think that some of these tales must be written in the "language of the future," and be meant for children in those days of the "sweet by and by" when all boys and girls shall have passed "Standard VI.," and be in a very different state of mental cultivation from any that they have reached at present. Of this description is *The Yews*, in which there is a passage on a certain "Mike's" views of the duties of Christian friendship, which may perhaps come to be a standard quotation on the subject, about the year 1900. In this benighted age we fear few boys or girls will make much of them, but of this the reader shall judge. Mike "felt that those duties had to deal with the whole moral, intellectual, and spiritual being, and for the treatment of each of these divisions of that mysterious being he had his list of simples and febrifuges and strengthening drinks, just as dear Mother Lawson there, in her patch-

work cushioned easy-chair, had for the many ills of the other great division,—the physical." But in *The Yeus* this beautiful language is not reserved for such elevated subjects as the duties of Christian friendship, the events of everyday life are described in the same strain. There is a fat old woman bent with rheumatism, of whom we read that "it was marvellous how she could maintain her equilibrium with that extraordinary gait and figure." And this prodigy of female old age possessed several animals, whose pursuits are narrated in equally impressive terms. She had a turkey . . . "the martinet of the yard, who hectored and domineered over everybody." She had dogs which "barked little gala salvos," and guinea-hens which "sounded strange muezzin cries" from the top of a chimney.

Another volume of the same class—though we are bound to say half a century older than those we have already noticed—is *Keeper's Travels in Search of a Master*. Two children, with whom Keeper is taking a walk, fall through the ice into a pond, and the dog rushes home to fetch help. Struck by his manner, the company from the "parlour" follow him to the garden, recollecting that dogs never act thus without some cause; that "though they are not always competent to judge of the extent of the danger they apprehend, their vigilance may be relied on as unremitting, and their warnings regarded as useful, and that the sympathetic sensibility of their nature enables them to distinguish, owing to their intimacy with man, between his welfare and his disasters." The children are rescued, but Keeper, though overwhelmed with gratitude and kind offices, resolves to continue his search for his master, which he pursues through manifold adversities. "He believed that his presence would remove all evils, for he remembered his kindness with enthusiasm and his capacities with admiration; and when you have blended benevolence with power you have made a divinity." After 112 pages of these

long words, Keeper's fidelity meets with its reward, and we cannot help regretting that his adventures were not related in a less antiquated and pompous style, for the story is in other respects pleasing enough.

We appeal to those who are in the habit of reading cheap stories for village children, to say whether our description of them is overdrawn, and we ask them, and all other persons who give such books away, whether they would not gladly, if they could, see a considerable alteration in the style of their presents. The last defect which has been pointed out would be easily dealt with; but the graver faults, which were spoken of in the earlier pages of this paper, are far more difficult to remedy. It appears to us that the first thing to be done is for writers distinctly to keep in mind the difference between books wanted for the direct religious teaching, and those required for the amusement of the child, a distinction which we suppose is aimed at by the various "committees" of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, though it is not easy to trace the principle which guides these committees in their classification. The tracts intended for religious teaching should consist mainly of religion, with just enough narrative to prevent the young reader from becoming wearied, and the story meant for the child's amusement should be full of fun, incident, and go, with a cheerful healthy tone, and in many cases with here and there a touch of religion, put in not "to do good," but because religion enters into the lives of most men, women, and children, and to exclude it would be as untrue to nature as to be constantly harping upon it, after the manner of the nauseous hero of the Sunday-school-book.

Of the first kind there are plenty of specimens in the shape of stories of missionary labour; of neglected, unchristened children being taught and baptized; of lessons given in Sunday-schools; of classes held for confirmations, &c. In such tales religious talk

finds a natural place, and the only pity is that it is usually dry and uninteresting, not, to all appearance, written by one who is versed in the temptations and faults, the feelings, wants and sorrows of village children, or who has anything to relate which has been gathered from personal experience among them; but the work of some lady who is in need of a five-pound note "for charitable purposes," and who, having also a vague idea that she will improve some one by her book, sets herself to compose, in stilted language, ideal conversations between the teacher and the taught.

But those who are in want of books of the second kind will find the choice small indeed. From time to time we have found among the heap of trash, of which a parcel of children's books always consists, a few tales which rise somewhat above the usual level of insipidity, and here and there one which is deserving of higher praise. *Big Bruce*, *Rambles in the Far West*, and the *Lives of the Two Stephensons*, are specimens of this sort of happy exception, and would all be likely to interest and amuse a child. But, speaking generally, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that, if wearied out by milk-and-water theology, we determine to have at least one volume from which it shall perforce be excluded, the only safe course is to choose a story about animals. In *The Bantam Family*; *Patz and Putz, or the History of Two Bears*; and *The Topmost Bough* (which last has the further merit of being a charmingly written little tale), we know that the only possible rôle for the district-visitor and clergyman would be to set traps for the bullfinch, to eat the bantam, or to be eaten by the bear; and, as we are firm in the conviction that they will be reserved for nobler things, we buy these books with a sense of safety and relief.

Now it is hard that writers, in their laudable desire to do good, should oblige us, by their dreary lectures and sickly morality, to seek in the farm-yard or forest relief from the tedious-

ness of humankind; and one thing is certain, as education increases, cottage children will become more and more intolerant of the kind of literature provided for their amusement; and if, in the absence of any wholesome reading, they turn to books and papers which lower and contaminate their minds, the fault will be less their own than that of the persons who offer them only the alternative of such mawkish stuff as we have been reviewing. We had occasion not long ago to spend an afternoon reading to a sick Etonian, the only available books being one of these foolish little works and the *History of Dick Turpin*. Not without some misgiving, we began upon the former, but as every pious expression of the painfully good hero elicited shouts of "The ass!" "Oh, what a fool!" and other stronger schoolboy anathemas, we were obliged to fall back on the adventures of the notable highwayman, thinking that even that not very moral story was the least hurtful of the two; and the same feeling of aversion to these stories of perfectly impossible boys and girls will, we predict, be annually on the increase even among our cottage children.

It is certainly true, as the defenders of the present species of book observe, that it is not easy to make very interesting stories out of the everyday life of village lads and lasses; but it seems to us a most erroneous assumption that no stories will be appreciated but those which are about children living exactly the same kind of life as that of the reader. Surely it would be good for boys and girls who have reached an age when new interests and wider curiosity may be awakened, to be occasionally taken out of the monotony of English rural life, and read of travels, sport, and adventures in foreign lands; or of the struggle and success of boys who have worked themselves up from the labouring classes, and made themselves a name among mankind? *Martin Rattler*, by Ballantyne, and *Smiles's Men who*

have *Risen*, are books always appreciated by boys. Their size and cost prevent their being so widely known among them as they would otherwise be ; but what is there to prevent that kind of story from being published in the tenpenny and shilling sizes which form the staple of school libraries and school prizes ?

There is a crying want of wholesome literature adapted to the rising generation of the working population. Who will supply it ? We appeal to two classes ; first to those who have time and abilities and the pen of the ready writer ; and to them we say, think it not beneath you to compose books for poor children. The task is no easy task, nor is it one on which your talent would be thrown away. It has been long enough in the hands of the thoroughly incompetent persons to whom it is at present almost wholly abandoned. Take up your pens, and let the test of what you write be whether you would venture to read it

to a boy from one of our large public schools, or a girl out of a carefully managed schoolroom, for be sure that if they would make fun of your work, it is no more fit for the village child than for them.

And secondly, we would urge upon those who do not write themselves to keep a watchful eye on the books they give away ; to cease accepting without a murmur from their publisher any trash that he chooses to send them ; to make a stir in the matter, and insist on being furnished with something rational when they have to give away Christmas prizes or to found a village library. If those who can write better things would do so, and if those who buy would take care and procure those better things, the present race of authors would soon be driven from the market, and we should no longer see about us a style of literature for poor children which is a reproach to the age of mental and moral culture in which we live.

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NOTES ON THE GERMAN MILITARY SYSTEM.

IN the May number of this Magazine an account was given of the system of training under which the German Army has reached its present state of perfection as a fighting machine. It was shown that the working of that system involves a great amount of self-denial and labour on the part of the officers to whom it is intrusted, and yet that the task is cheerfully and readily undertaken by men who belong to the higher strata of the German nation. It does not follow, however, that because a servant or an agent is willing and is not afraid of hard work he is therefore efficient. Efficiency is not invariably the accompaniment of industry and good intentions. It is proposed, therefore, in this article to explain the means by which the German Officers, generally and individually, not only become, but continue to be efficient ; and drawing still mainly on Colonel Kaulbars's report, to touch on one or two other points which have an interest for Englishmen, whether soldiers or civilians, at the present time.

The position held by the German officers with regard to the non-commissioned officers and men is, we imagine, unique among European armies. In no other army is the dependence of the rank and file on their officers in peace time, so thorough and so complete ; not on a few individuals, such as the commanding officers, the adjutants, and the musketry instructors, but on the officers as a body. Decentralization of responsibility, and subdivision of labour being the guiding principles of German regimental life, every one of the officers has to perform onerous and engrossing duties which bring him more or less in contact with the men ;

and the private soldier keenly realizes the reality of the work of each of his officers, and the fact that their relations to him are of an active kind. Let us take the introductory remarks of Colonel Kaulbars :—

“ If it cannot be denied that the vigorous method followed in the instruction goes a long way in securing the excellent results obtained, it must be fully admitted that the corps of officers is truly, in the widest sense of the word, the *soul*¹ of this instruction. Whatever may be the level of their own general education, it may be said that they are nearly all, each in his own arm, thorough specialists, and that they show the greatest zeal for the service.

“ Doubtless, there are exceptions ; but the officer who neglects his duty is closely watched, and if the measures taken with regard to him prove ineffective, he is sacrificed without hesitation to the general interest, by being turned out of the army, whatever his rank may be. For here, the *good of the service*, not only in theory but in fact, is the supreme law, before which general and lieutenant are equal, and it is a principle which is superior to all other considerations, that *no one may hold a post which he is unfitted to fill.*

“ Relatively, greater severity is used to officers in the higher ranks, it being reasonably considered that more should be required from those invested with more authority. At the worst, an inefficient lieutenant can but spoil his squad, whereas an inefficient divisional commander spreads his evil

¹ The italics are in all cases given as in the French translation of Colonel Kaulbars's report. Whether they indicate the emphasis of the Colonel or of an enthusiastic translator we cannot say.

influence through four regiments and with more lasting results.

"But the vigilance of the superiors is not the only safeguard in this matter; everywhere mutual supervision is exercised, for to all the service is sacred, and the performance of duty a point of honour and of professional dignity. And this sentiment is so strongly rooted in the minds of the immense majority of the Prussian officers that it obliterates all personal considerations. A useless comrade would never be tolerated by them, and would be obliged to seek another career, for an officer compelled to leave one regiment would not under any consideration be received into another.

"Thanks to the principles thus constantly maintained for many years, *the most brilliant results have been obtained*. The pitiless exclusion of valueless elements on the one hand, and on the other hand the importance of the material advantages and honorary privileges granted to the most deserving, have established the most ardent emulation in the corps of officers. This moral struggle for existence appears in all branches of the service. Among the troops, in the administrative branches, in all employments and in every rank, the effects are felt in the way that *every one pushes conscientiousness to an extreme point, and thoroughly performs all the details of his duty; and further in the esteem mutually accorded to the thorough performance of duty*. Every one knows that to maintain his position, still more to advance, *work not only persevering but fruitful in results is indispensable.*"

Our author's estimate of the system may perhaps appear to be drawn in too glowing colours, yet an examination of the system in detail certainly leads us to put faith in the accuracy of his conclusions.

It must be premised that the whole of the officers of the army form one corps. Candidates for entrance into the corps of officers are appointed to the army on the nomination of the

colonels of regiments, or they pass into the army through the cadet corps, the original nomination to which lies with the Emperor. About 58 per cent enter through the first-named channel, 42 per cent through the second. As a rule, the first stage of the future officer's military life is five months' service in the ranks, at the termination of which period he is eligible for examination to the rank of *Portépée Fähnrich*, provided that he is furnished with the Service Certificate from his commanding officer.

This certificate cannot be obtained until after five months' service exclusive of absence arising from any cause whatever. It is no mere formal document given as a matter of course. In the German service a written testimony as to character or probable efficiency in any capacity may at some future time, if incorrect, be unpleasantly turned against the writer. The certificate declares the fitness or otherwise of the holder to serve on in time of peace for promotion; it must therefore testify to his physical and mental qualities, his conduct and attention to duties, and the extent of his knowledge of them.

Here again in the original nomination of a majority of candidates for commissions, and in the subsequent grant or refusal of the certificate, we find a fresh illustration of the thorough justice with which in the German system responsibility is enforced. The Germans naturally argue that if a commanding officer is to be held responsible for the training of his men, the power of rejecting inefficient aspirants to the duty of aiding him in that training should rest with him. Even if originally he gave a nomination as a piece of pure favouritism, he has a chance a few months later of undoing the evil effect of his momentary weakness. But the great check to unwise exercise of patronage lies in the hands of the officers of the regiment, and will be referred to later on. The principle that no one has a right to serve in any corps save with the

consent of its chief is carried lower down in military life. In the German service there are in the ranks men who enter as volunteers for one or for three years' service. With the captain of the company or squadron alone is left the decision whether a volunteer may enter their ranks.

Assuming that the certificate has been obtained and the examination passed, the candidate now goes for eight or ten months to a War School, where military studies are exclusively carried on. Colonel Kaulbars has a keen eye for matters of practical importance, for he notes that the Instructors at the War Schools are, whilst the course is not going on, sent back to their regiments to take part in the grand manœuvres and to keep up their duty habits. A small matter it may be thought, but it is a rule which effectually prevents the instructors becoming "groovy" and "text-booky." They no longer appear to the students as mere theorists, and they have an opportunity of correcting their own tendencies to unpractical instruction.

Having passed through the school satisfactorily the candidate is submitted to the examination for officer, and if successful returns to his regiment to await for a vacancy. And now comes the final, and sometimes the most severe ordeal before referred to, which acts also as a check on the commanding officer's choice. *The aspirant must obtain the consent of the officers of the regiment into which he wishes to enter*, and without this consent solemnly expressed in the record of the proceedings of a meeting held for this purpose by all the officers, *no one may be promoted to the rank of officer in any regiment*.

The mode of proceeding is as follows:—The Portépée Fähnrich in order of seniority are proposed for the vacancies, the nominations and vacancies being equal. Votes are taken as regards each candidate in succession, absent officers voting by papers if they wish to do so. Should the officers be unani-

mous in favour of the candidate he is at once recommended to the government for promotion, the recommendation being accompanied by the record of the proceedings, which frequently give the authorities a valuable insight into the character of the candidate.

If the voting is not unanimous, but nevertheless in favour of admission, the minority individually record the grounds of their dissent. The proceedings are then submitted to the Commander of the *Corps d'Armée*, on whose decision depends whether the recommendation for admission shall be forwarded to the authorities. It should be mentioned that prior to a candidate coming forward for admission to the rank of officer as well as before he entered the service, most minute inquiries are made as to his private character; and the results of these inquiries are laid before the officers.

Rejection by a majority of the officers is therefore a crushing blow on the future life of a young man. The verdict is the result of close observation, and of public and private investigation. His military career is destroyed irrevocably, for the Fähnrich blackballed in one regiment cannot entertain the faintest hope of ever being admitted into another. "The refusal," says Colonel Kaulbars, "which he has just experienced, is known not in the whole active army only; the report of it follows him into the ranks of the Landwehr and the Reserve, and not one corps of officers would admit him among them. But this is not all; it is generally impossible for him to aspire to any public office whatever, and it is even with difficulty that he can obtain private employment; and unless he has private means, and is not bound to service in the Reserve or Landwehr, it is not unusual that he definitively quits the country."

The effect of this power of election, reacts on the efficiency of the officers; if an officer proves useless and incapable, and disgraces the regiment, some

of the blame must attach itself to those who originally allowed him to come among them. That the regiment's choice has turned out the regiment's disgrace, reflects on the officers. But the officers possess another incentive to a right choice, in the peculiar position in which the men in the ranks stand to them. No very great capacity or knowledge is necessary in the teacher of dull and stupid men, but as the intelligence of the students rises, so must the teacher rise to a higher level. The German ranks contain plenty of men who, forced into the service by compulsion, are far above the ordinary run of private soldiers ; they are well educated, they think for themselves, and to keep them in due subordination and in hand, their officers must be thoroughly up to their work. That the soldiers should think little of the professional knowledge of their leaders, would be an indelible slur on the officers of a regiment.¹

Elected to the corps, the young officer is at once set to work to learn his profession ; but the lessons he must master are all founded on the fundamental principle, that *in peace only that must be taught which is really useful for war.* "It does not suffice," say the Prussians, "to have successfully gone through a course of study as a cadet, or to have passed even brilliantly the officer's examination. These are but the foundation

¹ In connection with this subject the writer would suggest whether regimental nomination might not be adopted for admission to the Staff College in our own service. Nothing delights the opponents of military education more than the exhibition, in the field, of the failure of an officer who has passed through the Staff College. Let us suppose that the officers of each regiment in succession were required to select from among themselves an officer for Staff employ, the only condition being that he should pass a qualifying examination and reside a couple of years at the Staff College. That so-and-so, who turns out to be a failure, was the nominee of a particular regiment would probably at once and for ever put a stop to the complaint that men incompetent for Staff employ come up for entrance to, and finally pass through, the College.

for further study, they are instruments which will put an officer in a position to carry on his self-instruction, an education which should in truth be continued during the whole of his military career. Moreover, it is necessary that an officer should work incessantly, not only for the purpose of extending and perfecting the knowledge he acquired for the purpose of entering the service, but also so as not to lose it. And, moreover, every one knows how easily a young man forgets after a few years nearly all he has learnt, if once with his regiment he neglects to preserve and increase his scientific equipment by constant practice. Impossible to leave this to individual zeal, it is necessary to adopt measures to avert the evil."

Becoming at once instructors of the men, the young officers are taken in hand by their captains, and receive from them such instruction as will enable them to perform this duty ; field work is also carried on under the commander of the battalion ; but their education does not stop here. They have further during the winter to undertake work, with the special object of developing in them the power of forming a judgment on different military questions ; to keep up the level of their general education ; to maintain their interest in professional subjects, and finally to oblige them to sound and think seriously over some branch of military science. For this purpose each officer has to give in annually an essay on some subject, set by the Commandant of the Battalion. The subject is so-worded as to prevent the possibility of a short answer to it being given, and so as to oblige the officer to read works bearing on it. It is not the mere narrative of a military episode which is required, but a criticism or commentary on an operation. The only officers exempt from work of this character are the Company Commanders, whose time is fully occupied, and who, as was shown in the former article, are compelled by the nature of their duties

to read and to keep themselves up to the standard of the day.

Let us take a few of the essays given in the winter of 1875-6.

1. To First Lieutenant A.

Hypothesis. At 2 A.M., 1st Sept., 1870, Marshal MacMahon forms the resolution to move to the west by Mézières.

Draw up, on this supposition, the orders he ought to issue; accompanying them by a plan of the country on the scale of $\frac{1}{50,000}$, showing thereon the positions occupied by the French and German troops respectively.

Book to be consulted, *History of the Franco-German War*, by the Prussian Staff, Parts 7 and 8.

Give an idea of the manner in which this scheme might have been carried out, and of the consequences which might have ensued.

In the Parliamentary inquiry, Marshal MacMahon stated: "The march on Mézières ordered by General Ducrot on the 1st Sept., at 8 A.M., might have been successful. In the event of failure, the army had, at all events, the chance of escape through the woods which cover the greatest part of the country between the frontier and the Meuse. At the worst we might have entered Belgium. At 9 A.M. the proposed movement had become extremely difficult; at noon it was impossible."

Examine these opinions critically.

Next we have one of a more simple character.

2. To First Lieutenant B.

What advantages would either party derive from the possession of Bazeilles on the 1st Sept., 1870?

From the tactical point of view, what advantages and inconveniences resulted to the Bavarians from the occupation of Bazeilles on the night of the 1st Sept.? (sic).¹ Draw three plans of the ground on a scale of $\frac{1}{50,000}$, showing on them the three epochs of the fight at Bazeilles, and discuss the way in which the combat was conducted.

3. To Second Lieutenant F.

Study all the instances, in the war of 1870-1, from the commencement of hostilities up to the battle of Sedan, of cavalry charging infantry when the latter have been in any other formation than that of square. What conclusions may be drawn from these encounters, and how far has the experience of the campaign in this respect influenced the compilation of the new manoeuvre regulations?

Before following the essays to their ultimate destination, it is desirable to offer a few remarks on this form of professional study. There are a large number of officers in our own service

who are perpetually decrying book study and book knowledge; they are loud in their protestations "that practical work" is much required for every officer's education, but beyond this, study is a waste of time. What they really mean by "practical" is work in the field, work out of doors, and for this they have larcenously appropriated and monopolized the term "practical work." It is desirable to draw attention to the fact that the Germans, to whom no one can deny the virtue of practical soldiering, consider book study essentially a practical work; a work tending to produce practical results. Whether they are right or not in their idea, may be judged by looking at any one of the subjects above given. Would it be possible for any cavalry subaltern to rise from even a simple perusal of the accounts of the combats indicated, without thereby having acquired the knowledge of important facts, bearing directly on his own field work; and with which he could not possibly have become acquainted without such study. The Germans regard the study of books in its true light; viz., listening to the authors through the medium of printer's ink. Probably the veriest idler in the service would admit the use of listening to von Moltke, v. Verdy du Vernois, or von Scherff, expatiating on military subjects. His idleness can be his only reason for not accepting their advice indirectly.

All the instances adduced by Colonel Kaulbars are from the war of 1870-1. The Germans rightly judge that the most modern examples of tactics are the most profitable as guides for future wars, and are at the same time likely to be interesting to the student. The tactics of Marengo and Talavera are banished from the studies of men whose primary duty is to train others to meet the breechloader. It will also be noticed that the subjects are so framed that the critical faculty is exercised, and thus a check is given to the tendency to accept a military work as an authority, merely because

¹ Probably 31st August is meant.

it bears the name of some well-known writer. A further aim of the study seems to be to carry into practice the maxim that writing makes an exact man, and reading makes a full man.

And now it is necessary to follow the literary compositions in their further progress. Are they "noted and passed?" Are they "pigeon-holed," or consigned to the waste-paper basket? or are they returned to the writer with that formula "Examined, X.Y.Z." which may be used to cover so much idleness and ignorance in the examiner? No; however inferior they may be in themselves, they become extremely effective instruments of examination and vivisection. There is a certain grim humour in the way in which the Germans refuse to allow any one, high or low, to hide his light under a bushel. Thus in the case now under consideration, they argue, who so fit to pass judgment on the military opinions of the young officers as their Commander? It is the Commander of the Battalion therefore who examines the essays; but at the same time he is obliged to record his opinion on its merits of each, and his own views on the subject; and all this not merely for the edification of his subalterns, but for the benefit of the Colonel of the Regiment, who after similarly criticizing the work of his Battalion Commanders and his subalterns, is himself subjected to the same ordeal for the information of the General Commanding the *Corps d'Armée*, whose office is the ultimate destination of the essays.

It is difficult to conceive any means better calculated to prevent men of mature age from sinking placidly into inertness and getting behind the times than thus compelling them to hear and consider fresh views of strategy and tactics. The perusal of a well thought-out scheme brings home to the critic in more ways than one the fact that a soldier is never too old to learn. In military life there is so strong a tendency to differ as little as possible from the seniors with whom officers are associated, that the former are

frequently at a disadvantage, from the simple fact of other sides of a question than their own never coming to their knowledge. The scheme system with its gradation of criticism opens to the Corps Commander invaluable sources of information, and makes him acquainted with the views and characters of his more immediate subordinates. It is of course possible that the bias of a commander being known, the temptation arises to follow the lead, but it is most improbable that all the minds of a *Corps d'Armée* could be induced to run in one and the same groove on a given subject.

Another plan popular with some commanders is to draw out an imaginary series of operations in the immediate vicinity of the station and to call for special memoirs on various points connected with those operations. There can be little doubt as to the value of such a system as a means of compelling a thorough study of the ground and of the details of military movements, but a larger calibre of mind is required for its conduct than for the criticism of a written essay on an incident of military history.

In the cavalry and the artillery the instruction is given, in the former, sometimes by the squadron commander, sometimes by the commander of the regiment, and in the latter, by the officer who has charge of the division of artillery to which the battery belongs.

One of the principles of the German system is, as will be seen from the foregoing remarks, that no one, on account of his rank, is above criticism, and constantly recurring inspection and testing. More than one lieutenant and also *more than one General* have, says Colonel Kaulbars, learnt to their cost that the interests of the service are superior to interests arising from personal considerations, the lieutenant from having drawn up a memoir carelessly and negligently, the general from having passed a superficial or unfounded criticism on the work of an inferior. Both have been compelled to leave the

service by the simple measure of *promoting a junior over them*.

But if much is required of the subaltern officers, on the other hand the greatest care is taken that their time shall not be wasted on the performance of nominal duties. The "orderly officer" with his inquiry as to "complaints" may be said not to exist in the German service. It is only in large garrisons that an "*officier du jour*" is detailed; for, as the Germans most sensibly remark, "this officer's interference being called for about once in ten years, it is bad economy to lose daily the amount of useful work represented by one day of an officer's life. Even if anything out of the way does occur, there is always present a non-commissioned officer on duty to take the first steps in the matter, and he can always send for assistance to the nearest officer. The principle followed is to *economize as far as possible the use of the officers, and to direct all their powers to that object which is supreme above all others, the instruction of the troops, rather than to fritter them away on all kinds of trivial matters.*" By adhering to this rule, and moreover by arranging duties so that if an officer is told off for a fatigue the men he is instructing shall be told off to it also, as little time as possible is wasted.

But it is not by disciplinary measures alone that the training of the young officers is governed, the social life of the officer tends strongly to bend his ideas and thoughts in a professional direction.

Probably nothing tends more to produce this effect than the Casinos or military clubs which exist in each regiment. The clubs correspond closely to the messes of our own service. To the Casino an officer on joining pays 4*l.* 10*s.*, with a monthly subscription of 3*s.* In many regiments he brings with him a silver knife and fork, and spoons of the regimental pattern, and which he leaves behind him on quitting the corps. Dining at mess is, except as regards the seniors and the married officers, almost compulsory, for it is

considered that an officer ought to prefer the society of his brother officers before anything else, and to think himself nowhere better off than in their company. Colonel Kaulbars states that more than once absence from mess has led to a hint being given to the delinquent that if he has so little taste for the society of his comrades, he had better give them up altogether, and leave the regiment. That this system must be extremely trying at first to the new comers, may readily be believed, but that one object is attained, namely, saturating the officers' minds with professional ideas, is equally probable.

But here again we find that strange union of apparently contradictory or inconsistent lines of action which is so thoroughly characteristic of the German system. No miser guards his coins more carefully or rings them more often to assure himself of their value, than do the superior officers try those below them; to inhale a certain quantity of professional ozone is the daily task of every regimental officer, and yet, this secured, the seniors carefully abstain from any further dry nursing. In Germany, the barrack accommodation is limited, and about one-fourth of the whole army live permanently cantoned in private buildings; it is consequently only a proportion of the officers who are provided with quarters in the barracks; these are usually the juniors, not only because their pay is ill-suited to meet the expenses of private lodgings, but also because their duty as instructors renders their constant presence in barracks desirable. The seniors, as a rule, reside away from the barracks, and the reply given to Colonel Kaulbars by one of them, in answer to a question on the subject, is most striking. The speaker was a captain. "We take special care," he said, "not to live near the barracks. Our doing so would be a restraint on the lower ranks, and the result would be this: that the commanding officer being always present at the drill, would in spite of himself begin to

interfere with it, and would destroy all initiative among the instructors and the captains. It is not we who conduct the drill; we ought therefore to appear on the drill-ground only occasionally, to assure ourselves that things are going on properly."

What a remarkable example this of the fact that the Germans have adopted in spirit as well as in the letter, the maxim that to make a man do his work properly you must show him that you thoroughly trust him!

But, as Colonel Kaulbars freely admits, even in this flock there are black sheep. These must be got rid of, and they are got rid of, but without any noise. The German army is careful to wash its dirty linen at home. Nothing do the authorities more scrupulously guard than the honour of the epaulette: if an unpleasant task has to be performed by the authorities with regard to an officer, it is done quietly. And probably no more powerful lever exists for the noiseless expulsion of a black sheep than the quarterly publication of the *Rangliste*, an army list showing the position of every officer in order of seniority, and the nature of his employment. It must be remembered that promotion goes by seniority in each arm, and not by seniority in any particular regiment. Thus the senior captain of one regiment may find himself transferred on promotion to another regiment he has never seen before, but he is nevertheless received there as one of the society to which all alike belong. No favouritism has placed him over the heads of the officers belonging to it, and it merely resembles the transfer effected between battalions of the same regiment in our own service. Should then the same name be found in successive numbers of the *Rangliste* at the head of the same rank, it is probable that the career of the owner of the name is practically finished. Standing still means supercession, and supercession by a junior is a verdict of inefficiency. As a rule, the superceded officer at once leaves

the service. "In fact," says Colonel Kaulbars, "if an officer finding himself in such a position hesitated to go, his brother officers, considering his honour compromised, would compel him to retire."

But should an officer have to submit to such an indignity, it seems most probable that he has only himself to thank for the result. Looking at the daily life of a German officer it seems as unnatural that he should not know his duty, as that he should be ignorant of the language he hears spoken around him.

Such, then, are the surrounding circumstances of a German officer's existence. Before finally quitting the examination of the Colonel's report, we purpose to submit for consideration one or two features of the German system which appear to be intimately connected with the question of general efficiency.

These features are Permanency of Garrisons and the system of Magazines for Clothing and Equipment.

In every country the localities selected for garrisons in peace time are the same for a long series of years. The Germans have taken advantage of this fact, and do all in their power to localise the troops in these localities. There is therefore no shifting from one garrison to another. A regiment does not find itself for a few months in Hanover, the ensuing winter in Berlin, and the following autumn at manoeuvres in Silesia. They argue that, among other disadvantages, change of station means loss of time in the instruction, disarrangement of the administrative branches, and injury to the moral tone of the men. After the war of 1870-1 all the regiments save those affected by the rearrangement of territory returned to their old quarters. Among other advantages arising from the permanency of distribution is, first of all, ease in recruiting and in mobilising. No time is lost in the transmission of recruits to their corps, or in collecting the reservists, whilst the expense of both operations is reduced to a

minimum. The instruction of the men is further facilitated by the knowledge possessed by the officers of the qualities of the population from which the regiment is recruited; discipline is maintained, and a high standard of morality rendered possible by the intimate connection which in course of time springs up between the inhabitants of a town and the men who compose its garrison.

It is probably owing to this connection that the cantoning of a large part of the army in private buildings leads to so few evil results. It is somewhat curious that at the very time a writer in the January and February numbers of the *Nineteenth Century* was stating that the apathy of the British public as regards the army is due to the "withdrawal of the soldiers of the standing army as much as possible from public view and public interest by lodging them in barracks apart from the people," following this up by the assertion that "the extensive barrack system has been and continues to be a curse to this country," the Germans, whom the same writer holds up as the model soldier-makers of Europe, and as worthy to be followed by Englishmen, should be taking measures to build barracks for that part of the army which has hitherto lived among the people. The officers complain that men living out of barracks necessarily escape supervision, and that discipline and military tone suffer. It is difficult to understand how it could be otherwise.

But one of the most important results of permanency of location is the possibility of decentralisation of the administrative branches. An examination into the system carried out in the clothing department will be found interesting. It may be premised, however, that Englishmen, accustomed to pour out millions of money in time of war, and to hear that the national financial resources are extensive enough to command the market and to buy anything that can possibly

be required on an emergency, will hardly give sufficient credit to one of the most noticeable features of the system, namely, its economy.

Colonel Kaulbars was so impressed with the system that he regards it as one of the most important elements in the military power of Prussia. To the arrangements of the clothing and equipment magazines is due, in the colonel's opinion, the lightning-like rapidity with which an army can pass from a peace footing to one of war (a matter of deep interest to Englishmen at the present time in connection with the calling in of reserves).

All clothing and equipment is deposited in one of three kinds of magazine:—

1. The Company, Squadron, or Battery magazine.
2. The Battalion, or (in the artillery) Divisional magazine.
3. The Regimental magazine.

Let us see what each contains:—

1. In the Company magazine are—First, for every man on a peace footing a war equipment (*Kriegs-Garniture*), composed of a complete set of clothes and necessaries absolutely new. The only article of service not kept in store is the weapon which the soldier daily uses. On war breaking out every man is supplied with this new kit; a double advantage resulting, namely, that it will wear longer without requiring repair and renewal, and thus a smaller kit will suffice for the first period of the campaign. Later on, when the transport arrangements are in order and the first pressure of traffic has passed away, the deficiency can be made good. Secondly, the magazine contains for each man on the peace footing another new set of equipment and clothing (*Neue oder Parade-Garniture*), to be worn on dress parades; and, lastly, the Sunday suit (*Sonntags-Garniture*). In addition to these there are, either in the hands of the men or else in the magazine, a suit (*Dienst-Garniture*) to be worn on guard or for duty outside the barracks; and also a suit (*Haus-Garniture*), yet older than

that last named, to be worn inside the barracks. All clothing being the property of the company, the company-leader is responsible for its keeping, and some commanders, by judiciously regulating the issue and repair of these suits, eventually succeed in collecting as many as eight suits per man; but, as a rule, the fifth, or *Haus-Garniture*, suit disappears every year, being used for clothing the men sent away as reservists.

2. The Battalion magazine contains all the clothing and equipment required for the reserve men called up on mobilisation. These articles are new, and, like the *Kriegs-Garniture* in the company magazines, may not on any account be used in time of peace.

3. The Regimental magazine contains the magazine for the battalion, squadron, or division formed as a dépôt on the outbreak of war. This is used partly to supply the dépôt and also to supply reserves for the companies going on service. In it are deposited the spare suits of the mobilised troops.

It is from this magazine that detachments sent to fill up the gaps caused by casualties in the ranks of the battalion are equipped. In a similar manner the Landwehr battalions of the regiment, and the dépôt battalion of the Landwehr battalions, have their complete equipments in the regimental magazine; and, finally, a special reserve magazine of stores for two companies on a war strength is also maintained in the regimental magazine. The replenishment of stores is decentralised; a sum is annually granted to the colonel of the regiment for the purpose, and by a well organised system the stores flow from magazine to magazine, and eventually into the hands of the men under training.

From this arrangement there follows that for every single individual who may be called on to serve in time of war, whatever he may be, Landwehrist, Reservist, &c., there exists a complete suit, new, ready "down to the last

button." Marshal Le Boeuf's figure of speech is practically realised in the German service. "*Logical*," says our author, "*as the Germans nearly always are, they are determined that everything, ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING, shall be prepared before hand*, and that nothing, however insignificant, be left to be done at the last moment."

The German government have fully realised the importance of time in modern war. Making out demands for stores means time and labour, ascertaining the correctness of demands means time and labour, transmission of stores means time and labour; and all this expenditure of time and labour is avoided simply by carrying out Decentralisation in combination with Permanent Location. The Germans have no need of doubtful strength to delude them with a fancied support in the shape of a "wet ditch" round their territory. Readiness with them is not a virtue, it is a necessity. No fleets have to be collected for the invasion of their country; no torpedoes, no first line of defences have to be broken through before the enemy is at their gates. The enemy is there knocking at the door, or ominously murmuring outside, and "*toijours prêt*" must be their motto. Without the arrangements thus sketched, effective and rapid mobilisation would be impossible; whereas, under the existing system, not only is the Infantry ready to march on the sixth and the Cavalry on the eighth day after the order to mobilise is issued, but those troops stationed within forty-eight miles of the frontier are ready for the field on the third day. Colonel Kaulbars has certainly not exaggerated the importance of the magazine system.

In those portions of the Colonel's report on which we have not touched, will be found a mine of instructive information of a technical character; but for our purpose it has been sufficient to select for examination those parts which bear on the general principles followed in training men and officers, and those also which convey

a fair idea of the thoroughness which characterises every branch of the German system. A soldier who has studied that system cannot fail to regard it with a feeling of reverential admiration. It is to him the type of perfection of his art; it represents a pitch of excellence, a standard to be attained to if possible.

History has repeated itself; and as in 1760 so in 1878, the Germans are in regard to war immeasurably ahead of the rest of Europe. And it can hardly be otherwise. The severe lesson, the bitter experience, of 1806, arising from a presumptuous reliance on past glories, sent Prussia to school, a humble learner of a new dialect for some sixty years; then an experiment on a small scale to test its own acquirements; confidence obtained and defects made apparent, only, however, to be remedied; a second and more critical and costly trial in 1866, still more open exposure and consequent repair of faults; and then the final crowning triumph of 1870. Soldiers may be made soldiers in a few months, but for the production of an army years and years are required. And if now we have much to learn, much leeway to make up, it is the English nation, who prior to the Crimean war detested all things military, and not the English army, that is to blame.

To the arguments of the advocates of the German system and of its closer application to this country, three objections are generally offered:—

1. The nation will not submit to universal service.
2. The civil branches of the army will not allow decentralisation.
3. The officers cannot be induced to work as the Germans work.

As regards the first objection, it is for civilians to say what foundation there is for this statement; it is to be feared, however, that there is too much truth in it.

As regards the second, it may be said that so long as triplicate returns furnish bread and butter to a class whose primary article of faith is, that

but for their supervision the army would squander the public money, so long will centralisation be maintained. How far its maintenance will be continued rests with public opinion to decide.

As regards the third objection, we unhesitatingly declare it to be devoid of foundation. The British officer has a curious habit of doing what he is told to do, and fresh work, provided he be placed in a position to perform it properly, will be accepted with cheerfulness and carried on with zeal. Perhaps this last statement is of too sweeping a character, and we hasten therefore to modify it. One class of the nation from which a portion of the officers are drawn will no longer continue its supply, and those of this class already in the service will gradually retire from it. We mean wealthy men, or the sons of wealthy men with great expectations. They will probably find it impossible to reconcile with their increased work the claims and duties which the possession of wealth entails on its owners, and having to choose between the two lines of employment will probably quit the army and take up that which affords the greater amount of personal gratification. Some wealthy men, enthusiastic soldiers such as we could even now name, will remain in the ranks, a bright example to all. Still the loss of men of large means will not be an unmixed evil, as, save in exceptional cases, wealthy men are little likely to become thoroughly professional soldiers in the British service.

If, however, neither Nation, War Department, nor Officers will allow the change, then we ask that all concerned may be reasonable in their demands on the Army. It is childish to throw discredit on a trainer for his stable not winning a race when his hands have been tied in the collection of a stud, the administration of his business, and the training of his horses.

In conclusion we will add one re-

mark. In 1870 the hearts of all Englishmen, civilians as well as military, were stirred by the spirit of the times ; and the authorities, backed by public opinion, were able to make great improvements in every direction in our military system ; there are not wanting now symptoms that we are nearing in this matter the stage known as " Rest and be thankful "

In military matters, Progress, incessant and untiring, is essential for the maintenance of efficiency, if by efficiency we mean a superiority, not over barbaric tribes, but over the other nations of Europe. During the last eight years much has been done, but much more still remains undone. A stern chase is proverbially a long one. Germany has stolen ahead whilst

others have been slumbering on the glories and traditions of the past. Let Englishmen be up, then, and doing ; every day of hard, earnest work in our profession, every sacrifice for military purposes made by the nation, helps to bring us up hand over hand in the struggle. Relinquish now your efforts, doze away again, rest content with what you have gained so far, and assuredly the result will be that civilians and soldiers alike will some day be rudely awakened to the fact that our chance is gone, and that in the race between the armed forces of Europe, Eclipse's feat has been repeated, Germany first, the rest—nowhere.

LONSDALE A. HALE,
Lieut.-Col. R.E.

ITALIA.

ITALIA ! how I love thee, both thy brightness and thy beauty,
And thy flash of vivid verdure in the shining month of May !

With thy vines all richly swinging,
And thy blithe birds sweetly singing,
And thy bells of worship ringing,
In the shining month of May ;
With thy stout old castled places
With severe, majestic faces,
Hung round with storied graces,
In the brightness of the May ;
With thy towers that look serenely
From their proud cliffs, throned so queenly,
With broad mantles flaunting greenly
In the brightness of the May ;
With thy shroud so grandly sweeping,
And thy sins so softly sleeping,
And thy fountains freshly leaping
In the bright face of the day ;
With thy names that fill the ages—
Statesmen, singers, saints and sages,
And thy shrines with pictured pages
In significant display ;
With mighty memories near thee
In strength to atmosphere thee,
From distant doubt to clear thee
When falls the cloudy day :
With thy years of long probation
For the glorious consummation
To wear the name of NATION
In the brightness of to-day :

Italia, I will love thee in thy grandeur and thy glory,
And thy wealth of spreading beauty in the shining month of May !

II.

But, Italia, I may never change the land that I was born in
For thy beauty and thy splendour and thy triumph in the May,

The land of lofty Ben,
And of green, far-winding glen,
And of light-heeled, hilted men,
On the purple heather brae ;
With thy crystal wells clear gushing,
And thy amber torrents rushing,
And thy bright September flushing
With the heather on the brae :

With the wide Atlantic's roar
 On thy gray and granite shore,
 And the pure dew's dripping store
 On the greenness of the brae ;
 Where the fragrant birch-tree waves
 O'er the hollow mountain caves,
 And the headlong-tumbling waves
 Dash the glory of the spray ;
 The land where first I drew
 Sweet breath of life, and grew
 Hard of foot, and fresh of hue
 As the heather on the brae ;
 The land that never quailed
 When the haughty foe assailed,
 And whose mettle never failed
 In the patriotic fray,
 And whose sons aye stand together
 For the thistle and the heather,
 In the bluster of the weather,
 In the mildness of the May—

Brave land where I am rooted like the pine-tree on the mountain,
 I have loved, and I will love thee while the sun shall rule the May !

JOHN S. BLACKIE.

FLORENCE, May 18th, 1873.

The above lines were written under the natural feelings which arose within me when I contrasted the luxuriant garden of Italian landscape with the sandy monotony and artificial culture of the Nile from which I had just returned. I append this note simply to say that those who wish to see the Paradisiac beauty of this fair country

should by all means see it in the brightness and greenness of the May, for in April it is only budding into its greatest beauty, and in June the verdure of the fields is not always accompanied by the freshness of the cool breeze so necessary, at least to British lungs, for the full enjoyment of the country.—J. S. B.

LA RÉVOLUTION.¹

THE French Revolution, it has been justly remarked, contained an element rare or unknown elsewhere in political crises, and one which properly characterises religious movements. The latter, by their nature, transcend the narrow limits of nationality and race, and appeal to all who have ears to hear. The propagation of Republican principles in 1789, and for some years afterwards, resembled much more the propagation of a faith than the institution of a polity. The rights of man were preached by the Jacobins as Salvation by Faith alone was preached by the Calvinists, with a further tendency to enforce conviction at the sword's point, reminding one of Islam. "Be my brother or I kill you," is a compact and not unfair summary of Jacobinical sentiment. To be suspected of aristocratic leanings is to be suspected of the worst heresy. A fellow-countryman who is not also a co-religionist is the most odious of enemies. The Republic is as intolerant as the Inquisition, and Torquemada differs only superficially from Robespierre. This fanaticism has long been sobered in practical politics by the stern teachings of experience. French Republicanism now ostentatiously proclaims that it only wishes to mind its own business, and without any ill-will to the rights of man, shrewdly determines to give its chief attention to the rights of Frenchmen. But this advance in practical politics has hardly been matched by a similar advance in theoretic politics. The principles of '89 are still the centre of hot contention, of eulogy or abuse, and a man, or Frenchman at least, needs to be wary how he meddles with them, either to praise or blame. At all times the most popular and effective form of religious polemics has been that of

historical narrative, in which adversaries are carefully painted in the gloomiest blacks and browns, and friends are arrayed in the brightest colours the artist can command. The abundant literature which issues from the French press on the French Revolution is still far from being purged of the fanatical leaven which is happily disappearing from French polities: and this literature is largely of the historical kind. Each prominent father or heresiarch of the Republican church has his voluntary and devoted historian, who sets forth the exclusive rights of his hero to public recognition and worship. The hagiology used to begin with Mirabeau, but since the publication of the *La Marche Correspondence*, which revealed his corrupt relations with the court, few are willing to say a good word for him. With this exception the *Acta Sanctorum* present an edifying series of portraits in which perfect faith casteth out criticism, and removes any mountain of fact that may threaten to discompose pious minds. Each party has its sacred bard. The Girondins have Lamartine; the Dantonists, Michelet; the Robespierriasts, Louis Blanc. Even the Hébertists with Chaumette and Anacharsis are now worthily sung by M. Avenel. Such zeal naturally produces heat and sharp temper. Plain speaking and angry contradiction mark the collisions of the hostile sects. The shades of difference are often faint, and not easily visible to profane eyes. But this is a common note of religious disputes, and could hardly be wanting here.

While the polemics are battling within the fold with insufficient regard to the impression they may create outside it, signs are not wanting that another order of persons is approaching the scene of strife with the inten-

¹ Par Henri Taine. Hachette, Paris, 1878.

tion of saying an important word. These are the critics, whose revolutionary faith is cold or nearly wanting. It is obvious that for them to be listened to at all, they must not be zealots of any other hostile church, and that partisans of Pope or King, of divine right, or infallibility, have no claim to attention. Such are *ex-officio* hostile to the Revolution, and what they will say against it is known before they open their mouths. The true critic is the man who wishes to get to the facts of the case regardless of which side they may seem to favour. An offensive character therefore to all parties, who much prefer a rash and hot opponent, since he frequently damages himself more than his adversaries. M. Taine is by far the most conspicuous writer who has taken up the task of criticising the Revolution, and some evidence that he has discharged his task only imperfectly may perhaps be found in the fact that, while he has mortally offended one set of partisans, he has filled another set with delight. The Republicans in France have regarded his book as nothing short of a scandal, but their Conservative opponents have found it so much to their liking that they have forgiven on the spot a long literary career, which up to this time they have condemned loudly. At the same time M. Taine may justly plead that if he has not offended both parties at the same time, he has offended them alternately, and so far has experienced the usual fate of the critic. His recent work on the *Ancien Régime* was as distasteful to the Conservatives as the present one on the Revolution is to the Liberals. He in the first unsparingly criticised the old Monarchy: in this he unsparingly criticises the Revolution. Neither work is marked by lofty impartiality and sobriety of tone, and each resembles the vehement impeachment of an advocate rather than the calm equity of a judge. Still, as it is difficult to depreciate the old Monarchy without, in a measure, excusing or justifying the Revolution which abol-

ished it; or to depreciate the Revolution without seeming to say a good word for the Monarchy, a sort of balance is established, and a sort of justice is meted out to both, though not in the worthiest form such a great subject deserved. Two blacks do not make one white, and two opposite invectives do not make a thoughtful political work.

However, taking M. Taine as he is, and not as one might wish him to be, let us see what he has to tell us. His object is the destruction of the so-called republican legend, a dissipation of the sentimental and idyllic fictions which have gradually become current, in relation to the real character of the Great Revolution. France has recently witnessed the destruction of a legend nearly, if not quite, as popular and accredited as that which is now attacked. The present generation has seen the Napoleonic legend disappear, chiefly, but not entirely, through the able work of the lamented M. Lanfrey. But M. Lanfrey was much assisted by circumstances, and but for the scandals and disasters of the Second Empire, we may be pretty certain that his vigorous exposure of the vulgarity and meanness of the first Napoleon would have met with a very different reception from what it received. M. Taine is nothing like so fortunate. He appears with his indictment of the Revolution at a moment when its lineal descendants—however unlike these may be to their ancestors—are triumphant in French politics. The Second Empire discredited the first. The last Republic, by its humanity and moderation, not very logically, but very certainly, has cast a certain prestige on its most unsimilar predecessor. Even the crimes and follies of the Commune have not prevented this result, because the Commune itself was suppressed and punished by a Republican government, with a severity no Monarchy or Empire could surpass, and the will and the power to defeat anarchy and radicalism can no longer be claimed as a monopoly by Conserva-

tives. So far from being discredited, Republican principles have got a hold in France such as they never had before. M. Taine, therefore, will certainly not carry his point as M. Lanfrey did. He appeals to a jury whose convictions are hardened against him, and the very support he receives in certain quarters confirms the hostile prejudice with which his pages are read.

But an Englishman is not bound by French party ties, and it may be possible to be just to M. Taine without failing in allegiance to truth. Without any great novelty of research, or depth of thought, or charm of style, M. Taine must be admitted to have very seriously damaged the popular views of the Revolution which have been propagated by eminent Republican writers, and obtained general credence. It requires but a small acquaintance with the works of the latter to perceive that their mode of treatment is not historical in the true sense of the term. They are passionate advocates, pleading for a cause with eloquence, with profound conviction, but critical historians not at all. They would disdain any such cold-blooded office, as something unfeeling and well-nigh infamous. Michelet prays God to protect him from Mr. Carlyle's hardness of heart. "O glorious day," he bursts forth, in reference to the burning of the châteaux, "how long have you been coming! How long our fathers expected and dreamed of you in vain . . . and what has enabled me, their companion labouring beside them in the furrow of history, and drinking their bitter cup, to revive the suffering middle ages, and yet not die of grief? Was it not you, O glorious day, first day of liberty? I have lived in order to relate your history." When a man is in this frame of mind, he is not fit to approach the historic muse, who is an austere divinity, and demands a calm and serene mood in her worshippers. The atmosphere of excited feeling in which the Revolution has

been viewed both by friends and foes, is a refracting medium, so capricious and misleading, that the most obvious facts are distorted or obscured by it, the plainest inferences overlooked or perverted. M. Louis Blanc, for instance, a most laborious inquirer, and with a regard for historic truth far above the average, is nevertheless coerced by the despotism of strong feeling to make the following series of extraordinary statements—the more singular as he himself in other parts of his work adduces facts which suffice for his own confutation:—

"Readers, if you would be just, compare the Festival of the Federation just related with that which is about to follow. When, further on, you shall see hatreds waxing ferocious, anger becoming ungovernable, the prisons full, the scaffold set up, do not forget—

"That the Revolution was at the commencement magnanimity itself, and that its mercy knew no bounds.

"That it allowed to its enemies, through respect for liberty, free license to curse it and conspire against it.

"That it destroyed with infinite tenderness privileges which were nevertheless very odious.

"That if it disturbed the scandalous luxury of a few prelates, it was in the interest of a crowd of poor curés, who were dying of hunger.

"That if it stripped the nobles of titles by which their pride had impoverished human dignity, it was in order to give them the first places in politics, in the administration, in the national militia.

"That it was in the first instance slow to shed blood, to a degree unequalled since great commotions have appeared in the world.

"That it never ceased to open its arms to its adversaries, imploring of them one favour—to be just.

"That on a certain day, worthy of eternal remembrance, it called all the children of France to union, to conciliation, to embrace and love each other round the patriotic altar."

This is certainly a very remarkable instance of the power of preconceived opinion, to absolutely shut the eyes of the mind to unwelcome facts. For, although M. Louis Blanc says that the Revolution was "slow to shed blood in the first instance," he not only knows the contrary, but honestly tells us so in other places. It is true that he minimises the early atrocities of the Revolution to the utmost of his power, passing over them with haste, and asserting, with real disregard to historic accuracy, that such instances were very rare. But he does mention them, which Michelet does not. Still, the general effect of the two pictures is not very different, as was to be expected. No effort of will on the part of an historian to be fair can make his representation fair, unless the whole temper of his mind and feelings is in a state of balanced equipoise, spontaneously equitable to the just and the unjust, to the men and the cause he approves, as well as to those he dislikes and condemns.

It is in reference to this question of the mercy, magnanimity, and slowness to shed blood of the early Revolution, that M. Taine has executed a piece of thoroughly good work, which we may hope will not require doing over again. He proves by accumulated instances of cruelty, outrage, and murder, that the Revolution was from the very first what all unprejudiced persons knew it to be, a fierce uprising of vindictive revenge, and that the pretence that it was made cruel and sanguinary only through the conduct of its natural enemies, the nobles and priests, is one of the most unfounded ever maintained. The pretension is as untrue, as much against the evidence, as the pretension of Roman Catholic divines that the Church has never persecuted, never shed blood, never been cruel and unjust. The evidence which M. Taine adduces to prove his point is by its nature difficult to set forth in a review of this kind. Long extracts from MS. authorities, instructive but somewhat

wearisome repetitions of monotonous crimes, of disgusting brutality and violence, fill some hundreds of pages of his volume. One can understand how, writing for the public he addresses, the exhibition *in extenso* of the evidence which supports his case was a wise proceeding. Those who would refute him must prove that his authorities are untrustworthy, or incorrectly cited. As most of them seem to be taken from official records, the task is not likely to be an easy one. In any case it is the business of native critics to control his excerpts from the *Archives Nationales*. That he will be tripped up here and there is highly probable. But that the bulk of his indictment will be rebutted is extremely unlikely.

After all, no reader of Arthur Young's travels will be surprised at the conclusion which M. Taine is at such pains to establish. As early as July, 1789, Young tells us from personal knowledge of the facts, that the nobles were hunted like wild beasts, their wives and daughters carried off, and their houses pillaged or burned. "There is here in this hotel," he says, "a noble, to his misfortune, with his wife, relations, three servants, and a child barely a few months old, who escaped, half naked, from their *château* in flames." Arthur Young himself frequently had narrow escapes of being lynched during his last tour, and was told that if he were a noble, as he once hinted he might be by way of a joke, he deserved to be hanged; and if he had not promptly declared himself an Englishman, and made an amusing speech, in which he showed he sympathised with the people, he probably would have been. M. Taine proves that even before the meeting of the States-General the lives and fortunes of priests and nobles were at the mercy of any mob which thought fit to attack them. In April the Bishop of Sisteron was nearly killed, and only escaped through his horses running away under a shower of stones aimed at their owner. At

Aupt, M. de Montferrat was killed, and cut to pieces. But these are trifles, the first drops of the approaching storm. At Le Mans, for instance:—

“ The mayor’s substitute, M. Cureau, told the peasants that the report of brigands was false ; he recommended that the tocsin should not be sounded, and that the best thing was to keep quiet. It is inferred at once that he is in league with the brigands, that he has forestalled corn and bought crops standing. The people carry him off, with M. Montesson, his son-in-law, to the neighbouring village, where there are judges. During the transit the two prisoners were dragged on the ground, pitched about from hand to hand, trampled under foot, spat in the face, befouled with *ordure*. M. Montesson was shot, M. Cureau was massacred slowly. A carpenter with his tools cut off the two heads, and children carried them about to the music of violins and drums” (p. 97).

“ On the 31st of July, Lally-Tollendal mounted the tribune in the Assembly with his hands full of despairing letters, a list of thirty-six châteaux burned, demolished, or pillaged in one province alone, and an account of still worse outrages against persons. In Languedoc, M. de Barras was cut in pieces before his wife’s eyes, who was near her accouchement, and died from the shock. In Normandy, a gentleman who was paralysed was left on a bonfire, and only withdrawn after his hands had been burned. . . . The Baron de Montjustin, a popular noble, was suspended for an hour in a well, and heard a discussion as to whether he should be dropped to the bottom or be killed in some other way” (p. 134.).

But the climax of atrocity was reached in two murders—the one of Huez, the mayor of Troyes ; the other of Major Belsunce, an officer at Caen. The former, an “upright and venerable magistrate,” was distinguished by his charity to the poor. Only the day before his death he sent one hundred crowns to the poor-box. On the 9th

September, because three cart loads of flour had proved to be bad, the people rose in tumult. Huez was knocked down, bruised with kicks and blows, struck on the head with a wooden shoe, pitched down a large staircase ; a rope was put round his neck, and the people began to drag him along the ground. A priest, who begged permission to at least save his soul, was repelled and beaten. A woman rushed upon the prostrate old man, stamped upon his face, and drove her scissors several times into his eyes. One of the murderers declared that he had been despatched too quickly, and that the design had been to make him suffer longer. M. Taine ought to have added that this abominable crime at least was avenged by the law, and that the murderers were executed in November following.

The murder of Major Belsunce was, if possible, more revolting. M. Louis Blanc has some singular remarks to make in reference to this crime. Major Belsunce, he says, expiated by a terrible death the “violence of his disdain.” “He was abhorred by the people because he pursued the Revolution with insulting defiance ; because, mounted on horseback, and armed to the teeth, in the company of a man with a sinister countenance, he affected to smile with contempt at the *fêtes* which celebrated the recall of Necker.” For these and similar high crimes and misdemeanours the unfortunate major was killed and cut to pieces, and his heart was torn out by a woman, who is said to have eaten it. With regard to the murderers of M. Huez, the mayor of Troyes, M. Louis Blanc does not plead the extenuating circumstances which he could in the case of Major Belsunce—the riding on horseback, the evil-looking companion, and contemptuous smiles at Republican festivities. He prefers to suggest that M. Huez came by his death at the hands of hired assassins, and that the people had nothing to do with it. This is exactly in the spirit of De Maistre, who shrugs his

shoulders over the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and says Catholicism has no reason to blush on that occasion; it was only one set of ruffians who cut the throats of another set of ruffians (*quelques scélérats qui ont égorgé quelques scélérats*). Neither the Catholic Church nor the sovereign people can ever do anything really wrong. To assert they can is a "calumny."

M. Taine deals with the Republican legend in the way that modern criticism habitually deals with mythical story, by appeal to ascertainable facts. The facts he adduces are certainly not all new—many of them are probably not true—and in any case an impression of one-sidedness and partiality is conveyed by a writer who carefully culls all the damaging charges which can be alleged against one party, and is silent upon everything of an opposite character. But it must still be admitted that M. Taine is an able polemic, and is a master in the art of dropping a cold, penetrating fact, drawn from contemporary authority, into the effervescent theories of his opponents. He shrewdly abstains from personal controversy, in which he shows tactical skill. His book in consequence appears far less controversial than it really is. He seems to be quietly stating his own case, whereas he is replying with veiled vehemence to well-known writers. It is easy to see how one story is told in order to discomfort Michelet, how another is related to damage Louis Blanc; and there is no denying that the small and unimportant class of persons who care seriously for the truth of history have much to gain by this collision of sturdy partisans. The multitude who sympathise with one or the other side, and applaud or execrate as the hits tell for or against them—will, it is needless to say, derive no instruction from M. Taine's labours. But controversy has ever been a bad school for the cultivation of equity, though in the long run it is a necessary stage on the road to impartial conclusions.

M. Taine empties his cornucopia of crimes with such evident and grim satisfaction—he so abounds in ghastly narratives, revolting outrages, and disgusting cruelties, that it is difficult to give a notion of the frightful repast he has prepared for us. We are embarrassed with horrors, and the question as to which shall be presented as a specimen of the rest is not easy to decide. Still, at the risk of shocking delicate nerves, we must give a few extracts which may serve as samples of his method.

It must be admitted that his main contention is well-founded and undeniable—namely, that the classes and persons against whom the Revolution was directed made the feeblest resistance on record, when compared to parallel cases of civil strife. Neither the Crown nor the nobles had the least conception of how to face the emergency. The whole movement so completely transcended all their experience, so utterly outran their limited notions of political forces, that they made hardly a show of serious opposition to their own destruction. Their little schemes of counter-revolution were purely childish, in view of the object they sought to compass—bringing up the regiment of Flanders, banquets of the Gardes du Corps, closing the hall of the Assembly—mere impotent poutings of slighted dignity, weak as willows to stem the rising of the oceanic tide. The misfortune was that neither the one side knew its utter feebleness, nor the other its overwhelming strength; that the Crown and the upper classes were slow to perceive their complete powerlessness, and the insurgent people still slower in realising their irresistible force. Hence the spread of mad alarms among the people, who expected and feared a rapid vengeance from their rulers, and of fatuous day-dreams of recovering their predominance among the privileged classes. As a matter of fact, the latter were paralysed by the first blast of the revolutionary storm. As Arthur Young shows us, they were

hunted hither and thither like scared wild fowl, utterly helpless, and incompetent to make a stand for their lives and fortunes. The Republican legend represents them as terrible monsters, planning, and capable of executing, awful schemes of merciless retaliation. Both Michelet and M. Louis maintain this thesis. To them M. Taine replies—

"If popular passion ended in murder, it was not because the resistance was either great or violent, on the contrary, never has an aristocracy allowed itself to be deposed with so much patience, or used so little force to defend its prerogatives and property. To speak with exact truth, the aristocracy receives blows without returning them, and when it takes arms it is nearly always in union with the bourgeoisie and the National Guard on the invitation of the magistrates, according to law, for the protection of persons and property. The nobles do their best not to be killed or robbed, nothing more. During three years they never once hoist a political flag" (p. 389).

"All their clubs, even when liberal, are shut like those of Paris by the illegal intervention of the mob, or the unjust intervention of popular magistrates. All their associations, however legal and useful, are dispersed by brutal force, or by municipal intolerance. They are punished for having thought of defending themselves, and they are killed for having striven to withdraw their necks from under the knife" (p. 409).

It will be observed that M. Taine throws down the glove with sufficient defiance. We can find space for only a few of the many instances by which he supports his assertion.

"The popular imagination was poisoned, and whatever a gentleman might do he was no longer tolerated on his estates. On April 29th, 1790, M. de Bois d'Aisy, a deputy of the Assembly, returned to his parish to vote at the new elections. He had hardly got there before the Commune signified to him through its mayor that

it did not mean he should be eligible. He went to the meeting of electors in the church, and there a municipal officer inveighed from the pulpit against the nobles and the priests, and declared that they ought not to take part in the elections. All eyes were turned on M. de Bois d'Aisy, the only noble present; nevertheless, he took the civic oath, and it nearly cost him dear. A murmur arose round him, and many of the peasants asserted that to prevent him from doing so he ought to have been hanged like the lord of Sainte-Colombe. In truth, only the very day previous the last-named gentleman, M. de Vitteau, an old man of seventy-four had been driven from the local meeting, torn out of his house, where he had taken refuge, beaten with sticks, dragged through the streets and the public square, dung was forced into his mouth, a stick thrust into his ears, and he expired after a three hours martyrdom" (p. 397).

Nothing seems to have exasperated the people more than attempts by the nobles to participate on a footing of equality with them in civil duties and rights. M. de Bois d'Aisy was nearly hanged for wishing to vote. Another gentleman fared worse for wishing to take part in the Feast of Federation, 14th July, 1790, on his domain. As he, with some friends, approached to take the civic oath—

"A squad of twelve or fifteen men left the ranks and marched towards him and his companions, the latter going forward to meet them hat in hand. All of a sudden the squad level their muskets at them, and Bailly, a municipal officer, asks them what the —— they come there for. M. de Bussy answers that he has come to take the oath like the rest. Bailly asks why he has come armed. M. de Bussy replies that as an officer he naturally wore a sword, and that it would have been impolite not to come in full dress, moreover, they had no other arms. Bailly, exasperated by these good reasons, turns to the chief of the squad, gun in hand, and three

times asks, 'Captain, shall I?' The captain recoils before such a gratuitous murder, and finishes by telling M. de Bussy to take himself off."

He does so, and soon meets with further trouble. On an utterly groundless charge, his château was invaded, he and his guests were carried off to prison, first to Macon, and then to Paris, where he was incarcerated in the Abbaye. And only after months in prison did he succeed so completely in proving his innocence that he was set at liberty. (p. 398.)

Every month the position of the nobles becomes more intolerable, and threats of death are not left unexecuted. M. Guillain, an old sea captain, lived in his château of Polymieux, with his wife and two young children. In December, 1790, the house was searched for arms by the mob, who found none. In June, 1791, another search was threatened, although the Department had forbidden such arbitrary proceedings. M. Guillain refused admission without a legal order authorising the search. A soldier who had deserted seized M. Guillain by the collar. The old captain defended himself and snapped a pistol at his assailant. He did no harm as the pistol missed fire. At once the tocsin was rung, and two thousand persons assembled. Mme. Guillain implores the crowd to choose deputies to search the château; they search, but nothing was found. But the blood of the mob was now up, and they did not mean to have their trouble for nothing. A strong musketry-fire was directed to the windows. The doors were broken in, the house was pillaged from top to bottom, and then set on fire. M. Guillain, who had taken refuge in the tower would soon be reached by the flames. Some of the less ferocious of the crowd invited him to come down, and answered for his life. But he had no sooner appeared than others rushed upon him with the cry that he ought to be killed, that he had a pension of 36,000 livres, that it will be so much saved for the nation. He was hacked

in pieces, while still alive his head was struck off and placed upon a pike, his body cut into fragments, one of which was sent to each parish. Several persons dipped their hands in his blood and smeared their faces with it (p. 406-7.)

We must give one more extract and quit this repellent subject, of which doubtless the reader has had enough. It is selected as affording a good specimen of M. Taine's mode of replying to his predecessors. On this occasion he traverses a statement of Michelet. The latter, in the fifth chapter of his fourth book, makes some hot remarks on the "insolence of the nobles. They had *everywhere* assumed the attitude of defiance and provocation, and on all sides were insulting the patriots, the most peaceful people, the National Guard. At Cahors, says he, two brothers, who were nobles, amused themselves with insulting one of the National Guard, who had sung *Ca ira*. The people wanted to have them arrested, but they killed whoever went near them, and then retreated to their house, where, being supported, and having several loaded guns, they fired upon the crowd, and killed a great many men. To put an end to this slaughter the people burned down the house."

Turn we now to M. Taine's account of the same incident:—

"At Castelnau, near Cahors, M. de Bellud, coming on the public square with his brother, who was a Life-guardsman, was greeted with cries—'To the lantern with the aristocrats.' They do not wish to get into trouble, and say nothing. A company of National Guards pass and repeat the cry. They are still silent, but as the cries continue, after a time M. de Bellud begs the commandant to impose silence on his men. The latter refuses, and M. de Bellud demands satisfaction outside the town. Thereupon the National Guards rush upon M. de Bellud with fixed bayonets. His brother is wounded by a sabre-cut in the neck while he defends

himself with his sword, slightly wounding the commandant and one of his men. Alone, against so many, the two brothers retreat, fighting, towards their house, where they are blockaded. Towards seven in the evening two or three hundred National Guards arrive from Cahors to reinforce the besiegers. The house is taken, the Lifeguardsman escapes across the fields, sprains his ankle, and is captured. M. de Bellud, who has gained another house, continues to defend himself. The place is set on fire. From the cellar, where he has taken refuge, he keeps on shooting. Trusses of lighted straw are forced through the grating. Nearly stifled he comes out, pistol in hand, kills the nearest assailant, and then kills himself. They cut off his head, and that of his servant also, and make the surviving Lifeguardsman kiss the two heads; and as he asks for water, they pour into his mouth the blood which is dripping from the amputated head of his brother. Then the victors march for Cahors with the two heads stuck on bayonets, and the Lifeguardsman in a cart. The cart is stopped before a literary club which was held in suspicion by the Jacobins, the wounded man is made to get down and is hanged, the club demolished, and all the furniture destroyed" (p. 419).

In this thorough, solid way M. Taine proceeds page after page, and section after section, piling up his heap of horrors. After the nobles come the priests, who are ill-treated, imprisoned, massacred with monotonous brutality. Then the rare occasions on which municipal officers have done their duty, and tried to restrain the sovereign people on the road to crime or folly, and the swift destruction they met with for so doing, are recounted in grim detail. We have neither the space nor the nerves of M. Taine, and shall pass these over.

An important section is properly devoted to a less repulsive subject, the trade in corn. Every one is aware that from the date of the

famous hailstorm which destroyed the crops in 1788, the question of an adequate supply of corn was constantly discussed. Even when in subsequent years the harvests were fairly good matters did not mend much, and riots all over the country were provoked by the dearth or the insufficiency of bread. M. Taine shows with much force that it was really the mad panics and violence of the people that caused the greater part of their sufferings. The people insisted on having cheap bread, a third or a half below the market price. When the inevitable result was produced, and corn-dealers and farmers refused to sell at a heavy loss, the cry was at once raised against the wicked forestallers of corn who designed to famish the people. No magazine of corn was safe; to transport it from one place to another nearly always led to tumult, and worse, and mere blind fury caused in an aggravated form the worst evils it ignorantly feared. Towns and districts were reduced to a state of famine when abundant corn was near at hand, but to transport it was impossible. In December, the town of Limoges bought corn in the Indre, but it was not allowed to have the benefit of its purchase or even to bring it home. A troop of sixty horse would be required to escort it, and when the Government was appealed to, Ministers were fain to confess that they were powerless to enforce the contract. "The central Government has lost all authority; the local districts do as they like, and have not the least scruple in starving their neighbours. The people in arms at Nautica, Saint Claude and Septmoncel cuts off supplies from Gex. Corn could be had from no quarter, and but for the assistance of Geneva, which was good enough to lend it eight hundred *coupées* of wheat, the inhabitants of that district must have died of hunger. Narbonne starves Toulon; on the canal of Languedoc navigation is stopped; the populations on its banks repel two companies of soldiers, burn a large

transport, and wish to destroy the canal itself (p. 331.) At Laon, the people have sworn 'to die sooner than allow their subsistence to be removed.' The hospital of the Hôtel Dieu, at Angers, sends to buy flour at Etampes. For several days the agent does not dare even to mention the object of his visit, but goes at night incognito to the corndealers, who declare they would have no difficulty in executing the order, but they fear for their lives, and do not dare go out of their houses" (p. 341.) It is no wonder, as M. Taine says, that under such persecution, corn hid itself as much as possible—but there is no reasoning with panic. For years the French people, with their inexperience and in their novel position, were like a crowd in a theatre frantic with alarm at the report of fire. In their efforts to escape imaginary dangers they rush into very real danger, and damage themselves through their want of self-control. On the other hand, M. Taine has neglected to point out, as he was clearly bound to do, that many of the errors of the people in reference to the corn trade had been shared, at least apparently, by their rulers, and that Necker himself had given the signal for alarm by his unwise measures in 1788. And further, although there was monstrous exaggeration abroad in reference to the fore-stalling of corn, yet the terrible facts which had transpired not many years before in connection with the so-called "Pact of Famine"—when the odious Louis XV. coerced the corn trade to his own profit—were enough to goad a cooler people than the French to madness. Such breaches of historic equity detract much from the value of M. Taine's book, and tend to degrade it to the level of a party pamphlet.

M. Taine touches on several other interesting subjects over which we should like to linger. For instance, the undoubted and somewhat pathetic fact that although the nobles were the objects of such ferocious hatred on the part of the people, at no time had the

upper classes in France been so benevolently inclined to their inferiors. Besides the spread of Anglomania and liberal ideas among the noblesse, there was a genuine wish to improve the condition of the working classes. Arthur Young tells us of the efforts made by his friend the Duc de Liancourt to establish manufactures in his own neighbourhood, and mentions "an excellent project of the duke to give the rising generation habits of industry. The poorer sort of girls are admitted into an institution where they are taught a trade, religion, reading and writing, and the spinning of cotton. They remain there till they are of an age to marry, and then receive a dowry proportionate to their earnings." It is sad to think of the fate which overtook such plans within the space of two years. Indeed French society of that time, with its improved social tone, ardour for liberty, and zeal for progress, deserved a better fortune than that which it met with. It is not the only case in which the penalty of social wrong has fallen on those who least deserved it. Men like the Duc de Liancourt, with their schemes for the "rising generation," have the effect of children playing under a cliff which will soon overwhelm them. Floating on the smooth water which moves swiftly towards the cataract, they make their plans for the future on the brink of the falls over which they will presently shoot to utter ruin.

M. Taine also makes some good remarks on the functions of an aristocracy in a civilised state. It is almost the only occasion on which he allows himself to indulge in a vein of philosophic reflection, for his book, taken as a whole, is one of facts and not of ideas. He points out the services which an upper class, having wealth, cultivation, and leisure, can render, and that the choice lies between men whose chief motive is pride and men whose chief motive is pecuniary interest. The civil service of the United States, with its politicians and carpet-baggers, is a warning which demo-

eracies may well take to heart. With this exception, M. Taine has avoided political disquisition. He no doubt has his reasons for adopting this mode of treatment, and there are times when a careful collection of facts is the most valuable service an author can render ; but in that case the choice must be directed by a more austere equity than M. Taine has often shown.

Regarded as a contribution to science and serious literature, the work offers occasion, in many ways, to grave objection ; but, regarded as the ephemeral production of an able man of letters, one may feel surprise at the tempest of anger which it has called forth on the part of those who hold liberal opinions. What are liberal opinions worth if they are not liberal—if they are to include dogmas as peremptory as any promulgated by an Ultramontane council ? Do French Republicans pretend to infallibility, and wish to maintain that their party has ever been, like the papacy, impeccable ? What is the use of seeming to ignore disgraceful crimes, many of which, at least, are as certain as the Albigensian Crusade, or the Massacre of St. Bartholomew ? The disgust which such want of candour produces

ought to be evident to them from their own feelings when they meet with it in Catholics. And can anything be more unwise in a party which does not, we presume, pretend to be above human frailty than to resent even harsh criticism of its past, and to maintain that only bad faith and sinister motives can lead any one to expose its shortcomings or denounce its misdeeds ? What would be said of a partisan of Monarchical Government who should put on indignant airs at any allusion to the wickedness of Henry VIII. of England, or Philip II. of Spain ? On one occasion M. Taine tells us that the celebrated Malouet, while making an unpopular speech in the Assembly, was seized by the throat by a man who rushed from the gallery, exclaiming, “ Hold your tongue, bad citizen.” Many no doubt would be glad to resort to the same method of silencing M. Taine. If he is free to write and publish what he thinks proper, which surely no sensible person can regret, the reason is that the last French Republic, which has the good will of all civilized men, differs nearly in every particular from its terrible predecessor.

JAS. COTTER MORISON.

CRITICISM AND CREATION.

WE are apt to fancy that the powers which poet and philosopher put forth are of a quite different order from those which we feel in ourselves, and that commonplace people and everyday life have nothing in common with their high functions. It is not so. The most unlettered peasant performs the same kind of mental acts as the poet and the philosopher do, only in these last the powers work with a higher energy. We feel and energize first, we reflect and judge afterwards. First impulse, emotion, active outgoing; then reflection, analysing the impulse, questioning the motive.

Now these two moods of mind which go on alternately in every human heart go on in the poet not less, but more—the same powers are working in him, only in fuller, intenser energy. First comes his creative mood. He has given him a vision of some truth, some beautiful aspect of things, which for a time fills his whole heart and imagination; he seizes it, moulds it into words, and while he does so his soul is all aglow with emotion—so strong emotion that the intellectual power he is putting forth is almost unconscious, almost lost sight of. Then when the inspiring heat has cooled down the time of judgment comes on: he contemplates the work of his fervid hours, criticises it, as we say, sees its shortcomings, weighs its value.

This, which goes on in the minds of individual men, who have the creative gift, is seen reflected on a large scale in the literary history of nations and on the race. The world has had its great creative epochs, more frequently it has had its great critical ones. The great creative epochs are not those in which criticism most flourishes, neither are the epochs which are most critical those which have most creative force.

In nations as in men, the two moods seem to alternate, and, in some degree, to exclude each other.

What happened in Greece we all know. Her creative energy had spent itself, the roll of her great poets was complete, before there appeared anything which can be called criticism. When Aristotle came, and in his prosaic, methodical way laid line and plummet to the tragedians, took their dimensions, and laid down from these his definitions and canons for tragedy, the tragic, indeed the whole poetic, impulse of Greece had exhausted itself.

Then followed the Alexandrian era—the first epoch of systematic criticism which the world had seen. Behind it lay the whole land which Hellenic genius in its prime had traversed, and had covered with artistic monuments. Looking back on these, the Alexandrian men began to take stock of them, to appraise, arrange, edit them, to extract from them the forms of speech and rules of grammar—and in fact to construct, as far as they could, a whole critical apparatus. Learned editors, compilers, grammarians, critics, these men were; but poets, makers, creators, that it was denied them to be. Useful and laborious men, doing work which has passed into the world's mental life, but not interesting, stimulative, refreshing, as the true poets are.

A poet, no doubt, Alexandria had—the firstfruits of its literature, the most finished specimen of its spirit. In him we have a sample of what the most extensive learning and finished taste, without genius, can do. He wrote, we are told, 800 works, and poems innumerable. All that great talents, vast learning, unwearied industry, and great literary ambition could do, he did. The result is not encouraging. We do not in these

latter days desire to see more Callimachi; one Callimachus is enough for the world.

I have alluded to Alexandria and Callimachus because some seem to think that we in England, as far as poetry is concerned, have now reached our Alexandrian era, that it is in vain we shut our eyes to the fact, that our wisdom is to accept it, and to try to make the best of it.

This is the subject I wish to consider to-day—Whether, looking back on the course of our poetic history, and considering our present mental condition, there is good reason to believe that our creative, poetic energy has worked itself out, that our Alexandrian age has arrived?

This rather depressing view of our poetical situation, as though it were the time of Alexandrian decadence, may perhaps seem to receive some countenance from an opinion put forth with much force by a living voice which most Oxford men have probably heard, and which all are glad to hear—my friend and my forerunner in the chair, which he so greatly adorned. Mr. Arnold is never so welcome as when he speaks of poetry and literature. Even when we may not agree with all he says, his words instruct and delight us; for every word he speaks on these subjects is living, based on large knowledge and a high standard of excellence.

It must not therefore be supposed that I wish to engage in controversy with my friend, but rather to enter into a friendly conversation with him on subjects interesting to both of us, if I first remind you of his view, and then try to supplement what he has said by some other considerations which, in his zeal for a larger, more enlightened knowledge, he has perhaps left unexpressed.

He holds that the one work to which we are at present called, both in poetry and in all literature, is the work of a better, higher, more world-wide criticism than any we have as yet known in England. And by

criticism is meant not the old insular British prejudice, as it has been represented either in the *Edinburgh* or in the *Quarterly Review*, but “the disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.” Real criticism, he says, is essentially the exercise of “curiosity as to ideas and all subjects, for their own sakes, apart from any practical interest they may serve; it obeys an instinct prompting it to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world, irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind, and to value knowledge and thought as they approach this best, without the intrusion of any other considerations whatever.”

This is a view of criticism which, if it has a bearing on poetry, has a still more obvious bearing on other forms of literature, and hardly less on science. Criticism in this sense is but one phase, perhaps I should rather say another name of, that great historic method, which in our time has entered into every province of thought, and has transformed every one. Taking its stand on the high eminence to which all the past has been leading up, and casting a wide-sweeping eye backward on universal literature, criticism, we are told, sees only two great creative epochs of poetry, one the age of *Æschylus* and *Sophocles*, the other the age of *Shakespeare*.

These two epochs were creative and fruitful, because in both a new and fresh current of ideas was let in on the world. There was a breaking-up of the old-confining limitations, an expansion all round of the mental horizon, and this condition of things is the most stimulating and exhilarating of mental influences. This bracing intellectual atmosphere, this fresh movement of ideas was caused in the case of Greece, by the national exaltation of mind which followed the overthrow of the Persian and by the sense of triumph, security, and expanding energy which every Athenian felt while his country was building up her

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maritime empire, and Pericles was placing the cornerstone on the structure.

In Shakespeare's time like causes were at work, and created a similar expansion of men's thoughts. The Renaissance, after having done its work on the Continent, had at last reached the shores of England, and created there the "New Learning." The Medieval Church-fabric had been rent, and new light came in as the barriers fell down. A new world had arisen beyond the Atlantic, on which the bravest of Englishmen were not ashamed to descend as buccaneers, and to draw fresh life from the larger earth and wider ocean opened to their adventure.

In these two epochs, when great poets were born into the world, the time was propitious, and the result was the great poetic creations which we know. The "men" and "the moment" had met; that is the account of it.

Two great creative epochs of poetry vouchsafed to the world—only two—not a third.

We had always fancied that the end of last and the beginning of this century, the period embraced between 1790 and 1830, had been, in England at least, such a creative period—that the outburst of native song which then took place made it one of the world's great poetic eras. But it seems that it is not so.

We had imagined that though the brotherhood of poets which then arose in England contained no Shakespeare, nor perhaps any quite equal to Milton, yet that, taken all together, they formed a band so original, so energetic, so various, as to have made their era for ever memorable while English literature lasts. This is a common—I am inclined to think—a not exaggerated estimate of them.

But the high critical view to which I have been referring says, No. And the reason it gives is this. The French Revolution, the prime moving force of Europe during that time, took in France too practical a turn, was bent

too much on political results, and had ceased to supply that fine atmosphere of universal thought—"that current of ideas which animate and stimulate the creative force—such a current as moved the times of Pindar and of Sophocles in Greece, and of Shakespeare in England." In France the force of the Revolution was expended in carrying out political theories. At the same time in England the whole national life was spent in finding means of resisting those theories, of curbing the madness of foreign ideas. Even the most thoughtful Englishmen lent themselves to this effort. Hence, in England, the first quarter of this century was a period of concentration, of insularity, not of expansion of thought. This was not a benign atmosphere for creative minds to work in. The men of original genius were given us, but the outward conditions were not given. Therefore we cannot, according to this view, look back with complacency on the poetry which ushered in this century in our own country. And if we cannot so look back on the period before 1830, much less can we do so on anything that has succeeded it. Therefore we must stick to criticism. Criticism is the only function now allowed us. "Criticism first—a time of true creative activity hereafter, when criticism has done its work."

This is the view which has been advocated. Now consider its results. Had such high critical views been admitted in former times, how would it have thinned the ranks of England's poets! what gaps it would have made in that noble line of singers!

"Who on the steady breeze of honour sail
In long procession calm and beautiful."

It is one of the most characteristic things about our literature that the spirit of each time has passed into our poetry. The political changes of each age, the deeds men did, the thoughts they had, the change of manners that was going on, all these acted directly on the imagination of our countrymen,

kindled their emotions, and recorded themselves in the poetry of each time.

It has been truly said that "no one poet, however ample his range, represents all the tendencies of his time, but all the poets of any time taken together do." The same writer (Mr. Stopford Brooke) has expressed so well the historical nature of English poetry, as reflecting the life of each age, that I cannot, but quote his words:—

"If we want to get a clear idea of any period we must know all the poets, small and great, who wrote in it, and read them altogether. It would be really useful and delightful to take a single time, and read every line of fairly good poetry written in it, and then compare the results of our study with the history of the time. Such a piece of work would not only increase our pleasure in all the higher poetry of the time we study, but would give us grounds for philosophic study, and for greater enjoyment of the poetry of any other time. Above all it would supply us with an historical element which the writers of history, even at the present day, have so strangely neglected; the history of the emotions and passions which political changes worked, and which themselves influenced political change; the history of the rise and fall of those ideas which especially touch the imaginative and emotional life of a people, and in doing so modify their whole development."

It would be easy to illustrate the truth of this, and to show, by a survey of English poetry from Chaucer to our own day, how entirely every change in it reflects some change in national sentiment. I shall take but two instances.

The long struggle between the Stewart kings and the new order of things, from Charles I. till the days of Prince Charles Edward, how faithfully is it reflected in the Jacobite songs and lyrics. At first jaunty, truculent, haughtily anti-plebeian, they then change into a pathetic wail

of nameless singers for a lost cause and a departing glory, till at last they lend to the songs of Burns, of Lady Nairne, and of Walter Scott tender tones of imaginative regret for a vanished time. I suppose no lover of English poetry would willingly part with what Burns and Cowper have contributed to it. But what would have become of Burns, if, before pouring forth his passion-prompted songs, he had taken counsel with some learned critic, who told him that ere he allowed himself to sing, he must first know the best of what the world had thought and said before him. Indeed, after he had flung forth in his own vernacular, those matchless songs which have made the whole world his debtor, when he came to know the *literati* of his time and to read more widely in English literature, he acknowledged that, had he known more, he would have dared less, nor have ventured on such unfrequented by-paths. Wider knowledge, that is, would have paralysed his singing power.

Again: Cowper, was a scholar, and in his youth had seen something of what London could show him. In his manhood, from his Huntingdon seclusion, how much of England's homeliest scenery has he described; how much of England's best life and sentiment at the close of last century has he preserved for us! But had some representative of high criticism come across him, and bid him, before he essayed his task, know all the best that the world had thought or said on the same subjects, how would the pen have dropped from his sensitive hand, and left the poetic world so much the poorer for his silence?

Gray, on the other hand, had fully laid to heart and acted on the counsels of a refined criticism. He knew whatever of best the world had produced before him. Behind his poetic outcome lay a great effort of thought and criticism, and we have the benefit of it in his small and well-sifted contribution to English literature. I would

not wish to underrate the author of the *Elegy* and of the *Ode to Adversity*; but if the alternative were forced upon us, I do not think that we would willingly give up either Burns or Cowper in order to preserve Gray.

It is natural that in a scholarly and academic atmosphere, criticism, knowledge, and appreciation of the best should be highly prized, for this is just that which academic study can give, and which can hardly be got elsewhere. But that which schools and universities cannot give is the afflatus, the native inspiration which originally produced that best. These are powerless to awake the voice of the divine Sibyl, which, "uttering things simple, unprofound, and unadorned, reaches through myriads of years." If there is one truth which all past experience and all present knowledge teach, it is this: That the creative heat, the imaginative insight, the inspiration, which is the soul of poetry—that all this is something which learning and knowledge may stifle, but cannot evoke. That talk about the muses, and that invocation of their aid, which has long grown vapid and wearisome to us, had in its origin a real meaning. The *μῆνυν δεῦτε θεά*, the earliest poets felt as a fact of experience. Something was given them—whence and how they knew not—only it was not their own invention, but given them from without or from above in some unnamable way, and utter it they must. Since the days of Homer that feeling of an inspiration from within has dwindled, and literary and artistic efforts have tried to do its work, but in vain. Even till this hour, when poetry is genuine, it originates in a high enthusiasm, a noble passion taking possession of the soul.

Though the muse has been "shamed so oft by later lyres on earth," that poets now "dare not call her from her sacred hill," yet we see the sense of a veritable inspiring reappear in Milton in a higher form, other, yet the same. His "Sing, Heavenly Muse," and "Descend from Heaven, Urania,"

"The meaning, not the name, I call"—these are not empty words, as we know from what he tells us in prose of the manner and the spirit in which he prepared himself for song.

Philosophers, who, themselves gifted with imagination, understand how it works, acknowledge that there is about the origin of the poetic impulse something which defies analysis—born, not taught—inexplicable and mysterious.

Plato's few words upon this in the *Ion* are worth all Aristotle's methodical treatise on Poetry. To quote that translation which in our day has made Plato an English classic, we have Socrates saying to Ion:—"All good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful poems, not as works of art, but because they are inspired and possessed. . . . For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired. . . . When he has not attained to this state he is powerless, and unable to utter his oracles. Many are the noble words in which poets speak of the actions which they record, but they do not speak of them by any rules of art; they are inspired to utter that to which the Muse impels them, and that only."

Plato further recognises the truth that though the first and original inspiration is in the poet, yet that all who sympathise with, and can rightly interpret him, must be partakers of the same inspiration, though in a subdued and ever-lessening measure. Thus it is that he "compares the poets and their interpreters to a chain of magnetic rings, suspended from one another and from a magnet. The magnet is the muse, and the large ring which comes next in order is the poet himself; then follow the rhapsodes and actors" (the critics, we might modernise it), "who are rings of inferior power; and the last ring of all is the spectator" (or the reader of the poems).

In these few sentences, making

allowance for their antique form, there is more insight into the origin or first awakening of the poetic impulse than in anything contained in Aristotle's *Poetics*.

It is a long descent from Plato to Lord Macaulay: but I take the latter as one of the most business-like of modern literary men, who could never be accused of too much enthusiasm. Hear what he says in the introduction to his *Essay on Dryden*:—"The man who is best able to take a machine to pieces, and who most clearly comprehends the manner of its working, will be the man most competent to form another machine of similar power. In all the branches of physical and moral science which admit of perfect analysis, he who can resolve will be able to combine. But the analysis which criticism can effect of poetry is necessarily imperfect. One element must for ever elude its researches; and that is the very element by which poetry is poetry."

It is the old story. The botanist can take the flower to pieces, show you the stamens, pistil, calyx, corolla, and all the rest of it, but can he put them together again? Can he grasp or re-create the mysterious thing which held them together and made the living flower? No; the life has escaped his grasp.

Now this quick life, this vivid impulse, this unnamable essence which makes poetry to be poetry—these, learning, criticism, study, reflection, may kill, as I said, but cannot create.

By the flashes of uncritical genius the world has gained its finest truths. When it is working at full power, it leaves behind criticism and all her works. At those moments, when it is least conscious of itself, it achieves its best results. In such rapt moods the poet, carried far out of the ken even of his own intelligence, goes "voyaging through strange seas of thought alone," and overtakes new views, descires far heights of beauty and sublimity which he in his sober

moments can little account for. These are the far-fetchedes of genius, which lie so much beyond its own forecast or deliberate aim that it is only long after, if ever, that it comes to understand what it has done. This is that which is called truly inspiration.

When Milton flung forth these lines—

" How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence through the empty vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled,"

do you suppose he could have quite explained his imagery?

If we could call up Shakespeare and place before him the various theories about Hamlet, do you think he would own any one of them as his own? Would he not rather tell you with a smile that those clever fellows, the critics, knew far better than himself the thing that he meant to do?

But if the spontaneous impulse to soar must be delayed till the poet has looked round and ascertained what soarsings have been before attempted, and how much they have achieved, he will wait till the impulse is spent, the buoyancy gone. By all means let young poets cultivate themselves and their powers of expression—take in as much knowledge as they can carry without being oppressed. All the learning they can get, if it be really assimilated, if the native spring of spirit be not overborne, will come in to enrich and expand their imaginative range. But the knowledge, before it can be otherwise than hurtful, must have passed into their being, become entirely spontaneous, a part of themselves. If it be laborious learning, culture always conscious of what other poets have done, it may produce poetry that may please critics, not passion or fervid thought which will reach the hearts of men.

There is no little danger at the present day lest the poetic side of men's natures die of surfeit, be overlaid with a plethora of past literature.

In common with many others, I am

somewhat weary of criticism. We have heard the best of what she has to say, and would now beg her to stand aside for a season, and give spontaneity its turn.

Men of mature age, academic and literary persons, will probably be found giving other counsel, advising young genius to wait and learn. But these are not the poet's best advisers. If he desires to reach the great mass even of intelligent men, he must remember that they are not learned, and are not to be moved by poetry whose characteristic is its learning. These are the counsels of men who have passed forty. But the far larger portion of the world are on the other side of forty, and we elders must regretfully admit that it is among these the poets find their best and most sympathetic audience.

It was not by vast stores of book-knowledge, not by great critical efforts, that the long line of England's poets has been maintained—that unbroken succession which has lasted so many centuries. To them the actual life of men, the face of nature, their own hearts, these were their first and best teachers. To know these intimately was their discipline—supplied their material. Books and book-learning were to them a quite subordinate affair. But the demand for a great critical effort as the prerequisite of creation seems to put that first which is not first, and to disallow that instinctive knowledge of man and of nature which is the poet's breath of life. This view of things probably originates in the conception of Goethe, as the typical poet of the modern era. Whatever worth it may have in itself, one thing is certain, that had it been believed by former generations English poetry would have been very different from what it is.

However various have been the phases of it they have never been born of criticism, except perhaps in the days of Pope. If we may judge from all the past of poetry, criticism

must be subordinate to passion, science to temperament, else the result will be frigid and without vitality. It remains for ever true in the region of poetry that "immortal works are those which issue from personal feeling which the spirit of system has not petrified."

These last words are from a paper in a recent *Quarterly Review*, entitled "A French Critic on Goethe." I had written nearly all the foregoing before I read that paper, and when I read it I found in it remarkable confirmation of the views I had been trying to express. No one I think can doubt the hand from which that paper comes. But who ever the writer of it may be, I find both the French critic and his English commentator combining in the opinion that of all Goethe's works the First Part of *Faust* is his masterpiece. And the reason of this is, to quote their words, that "while it has the benefit of his matured powers of thought, of his command over his materials, of his mastery in planning and expressing, it possesses an intrinsic richness, colour, and warmth. Having been early begun *Faust* has preserved many a stroke and flash out of the days of its author's fervid youth."

Both critics agree that after this "a gradual cooling down of the poetic fire" is visible, "that in his later works the man of reflection has overmastered the man of inspiration." The conclusion to which the *Quarterly Reviewer* comes on the whole is that Goethe's pre-eminence comes not from his being "the greatest of modern poets," but from his being "the clearest, largest, most helpful thinker of modern times." Exactly so. Nothing could more confirm what I have been urging throughout than this estimate of Goethe endorsed by two so eminent authorities. In him we see on a great scale exemplified the tendency of the critic to mar the poet, of "science to overcome individuality, of reflection to chill poetic genius, of philosophic thought to

prevail over the poetry of passion and of nature, of the spirit of system to crush or petrify personal feelings." And this is one of the mental maladies most threatening to the intellectual health of our times.

There are places where it might be unwise to hazard thoughts like these, lest we should discourage the important duty of self-cultivation. But this is not one of those places. Is there not truth in that charge that to those who live here permanently there is something in the atmosphere of the place, call it criticism or what you will, which too much represses individuality?

I know well that Oxford has many sides, wears very different aspects as looked at from this side or from that. Seen in the early years of discipleship, or viewed from a distance down long vistas of memory, or revisited after years of absence, she appears, what she truly is, the nurse of all high thoughts, the home of all pure and generous affections. To those who are quite young there is perhaps no spot of English ground which sinks so deeply into the seats of emotion, or enters so intimately into all their "study of imagination."

But it is otherwise with older residents. For them the golden exhalations of the dawn are soon turned into the gray light of common day. For those on this side of graduation, whose manhood is harnessed into the duties of the place, what between the routine of work and the necessity of taking a side in public questions, and above all the atmosphere of omnipresent criticism in which life is lived here, original production becomes almost an impossibility. Any one who may feel within him the stirring of creative impulse, if he does not wish to have it frozen at its source, must, before he can create, leave the air of academic circles and the distracting talk of literary sets, and retire with his own impulses and thoughts into some solitude where the din of these will not reach him.

Will young poets excuse me if I make use of a very homely image?

They say that among the pea-fowl, the mother-bird, when she would rear her young, retires from farm and thoroughfare, and seeks the most silent places of the wood. There she sits days and weeks, unseen even by her mate. At length, when the brooding-time is over, and her young are fully fledged, she walks forth some summer morning, followed by her brood, and displays them with pride before human homes. This, I take it, truly represents the way that poetic genius instinctively takes.

Vital poems, whether short or long, slight or serious, are born, not amid literary talk, but in silence and solitude. Goethe, I believe, said that he never could create anything if he told his purpose to any one before it was completed.

There may be some in this place to whom it will be given to shape the poetry of a new time. If criticism be needed, this generation has done that work to satiety. It has edited and re-edited every great poet, found out all that can be known about each, and a good deal that can not be known; has counted and scheduled the percentage of light endings and of weak endings, of end-stopt and run-on verses in every play, has compared, corrected, annotated with most praiseworthy and sometimes wearisome exactness. It is surely time that this work should cease. For the coming generation we may hope some higher work remains to do—to enjoy the old and to create the new—to use whatever valuable result has been achieved by the laborious processes, and to burn up the heaps of rubbish in a fresh flame of creative impulse. The critic has had his day—it is time the poet once more should have his. And if the national life continues to beat strong, if the nation is fired with great, not with ignoble aims, then poets will arise to set to music the people's aspirations, and will "leave the critics well behind them."

And if any young spirit feels touched from within by the poetic breath, let him not be scared by the oft heard saying—that the day of poetry is past.

Macaulay, indeed, has maintained that as "knowledge extends and as the reason develops itself," the imaginative arts decay. It is the literary creed of Mr. Carlyle, several times announced, that the poetic form nowadays is an anachronism, that plain prose alone is welcome to him, that he grudges to see men of genius employ themselves in fiction and versifying, while reality stands in such need of interpreters. "Reality is, as I always say, God's unwritten poem, which it needs precisely that a human genius should write and make intelligible to his less-gifted brothers."

To discuss these views fully would require several lectures, not the end of one. I can now but throw out a few suggestions.

So far is it from being true that reason has put out imagination, that perhaps there never was a time when reason so called imagination to her aid, and when imagination entered solargely into all literary and even into scientific products. Imaginative thought, which formerly expressed itself but rarely except in verse, now enters into almost every form of prose except the barely statistical. Indeed the boundary-lines between prose and poetry have become obliterated, as those between prose and verse have become more than ever rigid. Consider how wide is the range of thought over which imagination now travels, how vast is the work it is called upon to do.

Even in the most rigorous sciences it is present, whenever any discoverer would pass beyond the frontiers of the known, and encroach on the unknown by some wise question, some penetrating guess, which he labours afterwards by analysis to verify. This is what they call the scientific imagination. Again, what is it that enables the geologist from the contortions of

strata, a few scratchings on rock-surfaces, and embedded fossils here and there, to venture into the dark backward and abyss of time, and reconstruct and re-people extinct continents? What but a great fetch of imaginative power?

Again, history, which a former age wrote or tried to write, with imagination rigorously suppressed, has of late rediscovered what Herodotus and Tacitus knew, that unless a true historic imagination is present to breathe on the facts supplied by antiquary and chronicler, a dead past cannot be made to live again. A dim and perilous way doubtless it is, leading by many a side-path down to error and illusion, but one which must be trod by the genuine historian, who would make the pale shadows of the past live.

It is the same with every form of modern criticism—with the investigations into the origins of language, of society, and of religion. These studies are impossible without the ever-present force of imagination, both to suggest hypotheses and to vivify the facts which research has supplied.

It thus has come to pass that, in the growing subdivision of mental labour, imagination is not only not discredited, but is more than ever in demand. So far from imagination receding, like the Red Indian, before the advance of reason and criticism, the truth is that expanding knowledge opens ever new fields for its operation. Just as we see the produce of our coal and iron mines used nowadays for a hundred industries to which no one dreamt of applying them a century ago, so imagination enters into all our knowledge now, in ways undreamt of by former generations. More and more it is felt that, till the fire of imagination has passed over our knowledge and brought it into contact with heart and spirit, it is not really living knowledge, but dead material.

You say perhaps if imagination is now employed in almost every field

of knowledge, does any remain over to express itself in poetry or metrical language? Is any place left for what we used to know as poetry proper—thought metrically expressed? I grant that the old limits between prose and poetry tend to disappear. If poetry be the highest, most impassioned thoughts conveyed in the most perfect melody of words, we have many prose writers who, when at their best, are truly poets. Everyone will recall passages of Jeremy Taylor's writings, which are, in the truest sense, not oratory, but poetry. Again, of how many in our time is this true? You can all lay your finger on splendid descriptions of nature by Mr. Ruskin, which leave all sober prose behind, and flood the soul, like the finest poetry, with imagery and music.

As the highest instance of all I would name some of Dr. Newman's Oxford sermons. Many of these, instinct as they are with high spiritual thought, quivering with suppressed but piercing emotion, and clothed in words so simple, so transparent, that the very soul shines through them, suggest, as only great poems do, the heart's deepest secrets, and in the perfect rhythm and melody of their words, seem to evoke new powers from our native language.

If, then, so much imagination is drained off to enrich other fields of literature; if, moreover, that peculiar combination of thought and emotion which is the essence of poetry, now often finds vent in the form of prose, what place, you may ask, still remains for the use of metrical language? Is verse, as a vehicle of thought, any longer genuine and natural? Is it not an anachronism, a mere imitation of a past mode? Have not the old channels which poetry used to fill now gone dry?

Perhaps we may say that it can hardly be denied that some of the old channels are dry, some of the early forms of poetry are not likely to be revived. Old civilisations do not

naturally give birth to epics. Such as they do produce are apt to be not of the genuine, but rather of the imitative, sort. Again, of the drama, in its poetic form, it may well be doubted whether it has not gone into abeyance; whether the world—at least this *eon* of it—will see another revival of the drama as a living power. Its place has been in a great measure usurped by the modern novel—(I wish they would condense their three volumes into one)—the modern novel, which depicts character, groups of men and women, their attitudes, looks, gestures, conversations—all, in fact, which reveals life—with a power that versified dialogue can hardly rival. All this may be conceded. And yet there remain large and deep ranges of experience which, just because they are so deep and tender, find no natural and adequate outlet but in some form of melodious and metrical language. Whether this shall be by original genius, pouring new life and rhythm into the old and well-used metres, or whether, by striking out novel and untried forms of metre, which may better chime with new cadences of thought, I shall not venture to say.

You ask for reality, not fiction and filigree-work. Well, then, there are many of the most intense realities of which poetic and melodious words are the fittest, I might say the only, vehicle. There is the poetry of external nature, not merely to paint its outward shows to the eye, but to reproduce those feelings which its beauty awakens.

There are those aspects of history in which great national events kindle our patriotism, or striking individual adventures thrill us with a sense of romance. There is the whole world of the affections, those elements of our being which earliest awake and last the longest. The deep home affections, the yearnings for those whom no more we see, the unutterable dawnings on the soul as it looks towards the Eternal, these which are the deepest, most permanent things in man, though the least utterable in forms of the understanding,

how are they to be even hinted at—expressed they can never be—except in a form of words the most rhythmical and musical man can attain to? All this side of things, which more and more as life advances, becomes to us the most real one—to this poetry is the only form of human speech which can do justice.

Again, there is the wide region of reflective or meditative thought, when the poet, brooding over the great realities of time and eternity, the same which engage the philosopher and the theologian, muses till his heart is hot within him, and the fire burns, and the burning at last finds vent in song. Of the deepest poets it has been truly said that "they are haunted for ever by the Eternal mind." To the poet in his brooding mood how often has there been vouchsafed a quick, penetrating glance, a satisfying insight into the heart of things such as sage and theologian have never attained? For instance, how many philosophies do we not find condensed into these simple, sincere lines of a poet whom Balliol college reared, and some still there knew?—

" And yet when all is thought and said,
The heart still overrules the head ;
Still what we hope we must believe,
And what is given us receive.

" Must still believe, for still we hope
That in a world of larger scope,
What here is faithfully begun
Will be completed, not undone."

Lastly, there is religious poetry, the poetry that gives utterance to faith, to devotion, to aspiration. In these as poetry found its earliest, so I believe it will find its latest springs of inspiration. Not only as the life of individual men, but as the life of the race advances, the deepest thoughts, the most earnest emotions, gather

round religion and the secrets of which it alone holds the key. And the more we realise the inability of the logical faculty to grasp the things of faith—how it cannot breathe in the unseen world, and falls back paralysed when it tries to enter it—the more we shall feel that some form of song or musical language is the best possible abumimation of spiritual realities and the emotions they awaken. An expansion of the field of religious poetry this century has seen, since the time when Wordsworth approached the world of nature with a sensitive love and reverence till then unknown, feeling himself and making others feel that the visible light that is in the heavens is akin to the light that lighteth every man—both coming from one centre. This unifying feeling, this more religious attitude seen in men's regard towards the visible world, may we not believe it to be the prelude of a wider unity of feeling, which shall yet take in, not nature only, but all truth and all existence? And if some of our most earnest poets since Wordsworth's day, feeling too sensitively the unbridged gulf between things seen and things unseen, have wasted themselves on intractable problems, and sung their own doubts "in sad perplexèd minors," yet this shall not disturb our faith that the blue heaven is behind the clouds, and that that heaven is the poet's rightful home. As growing time gives men more clearly to discern the real harmony between thought and fact, between the ideal and the actual world, the clouds will pass off the poet's soul and leave him to sing aloud a free rejoicing worship.

In the hope of that day we live, and though we may not see it, yet we nothing doubt that come it will.

J. C. SHARP.